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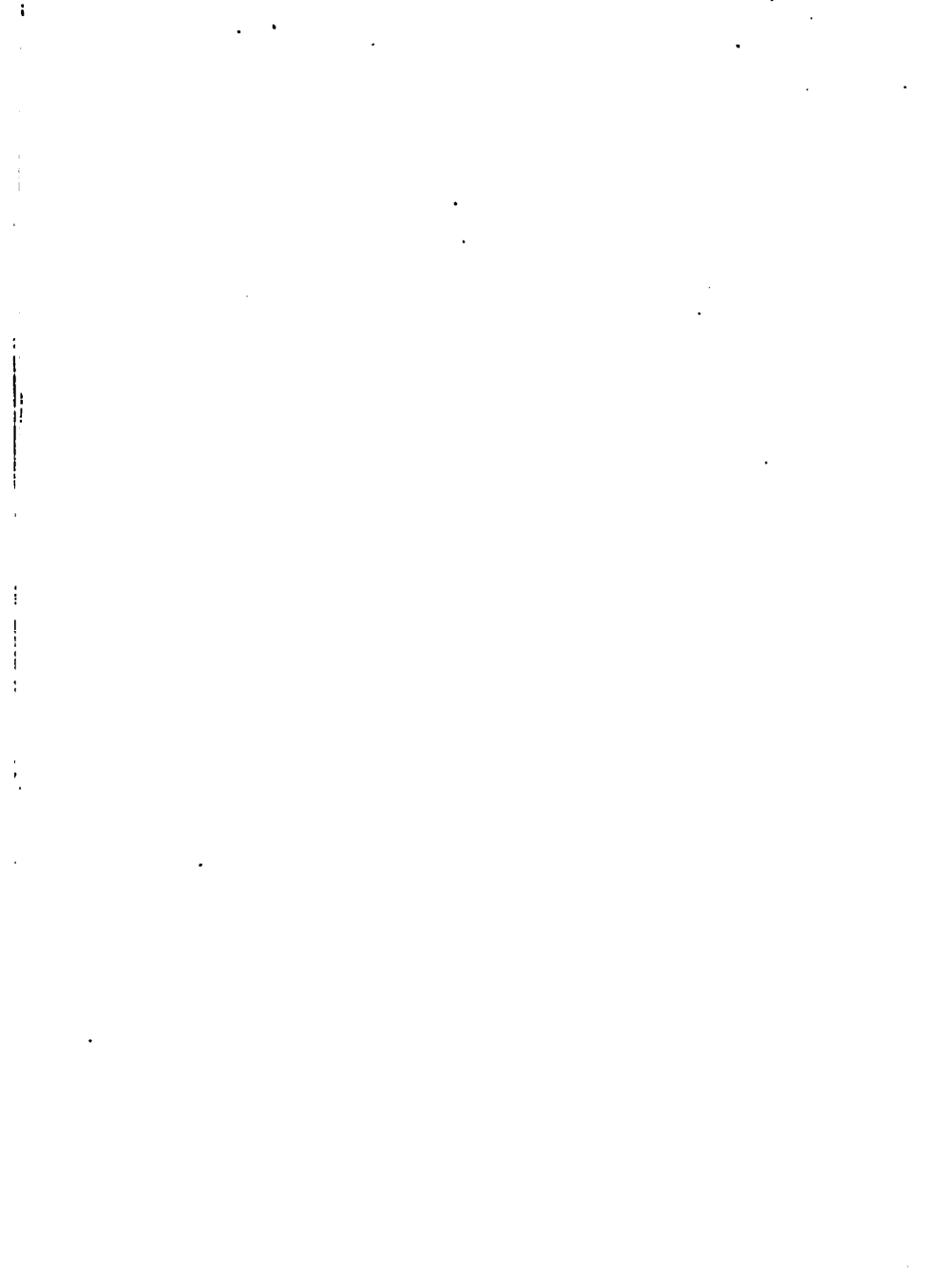
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NORTH WALES.







NORTH WALES.





NOTES OF
FAMILY EXCURSIONS
IN NORTH WALES,

TAKEN CHIEFLY FROM RHYL, ABERGELE,
LLANDUDNO, AND BANGOR.

BY

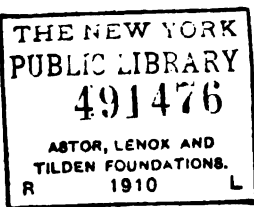
J. O. HALLIWELL, Esq., F.R.S.



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ROY VAN
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PREFACE.



WHAT is it all to come to? Is it necessary, because I take my family out for a few walks from some of the best known localities in Britain, that I should tell all the world, or by printing fancy that I tell all the world, about them? And the question may well be asked, considering that All the World and his wife go to all these places, and that it is hard if, between them, they cannot pick up for themselves what information is worth having; but they are easy-going, quiet people, who like smooth walking, and so miss a great deal of what is to be seen in the byways. Still, this consideration

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Second June 8, 1910

does not constitute a satisfactory reply. Well, I can only say, as an amiable and celebrated old-clothes' man once observed,—“I'll not answer that; but, say, it is my humour; is it answer'd?” People now-a-days, at least some people, do not write books for other persons to read, but to amuse themselves with the occupation of writing. It is impossible that we can all expect an audience, seeing that there are now more writers than there are readers.

But again I ask, what is it all to come to? If not for one's own sake, or for that of our friends, or of the public, yet in compassion to our libraries, I would ask the question, and, in the very act of transgressing, entreat all others, were it only for the last consideration, not to sin in this direction. It is fearful to imagine what will be the extent of the British Museum library two or three centuries hence, if book-making continues at its present rate. The catalogue, instead of as now being comprised within the moderate compass of two thousand folio volumes, will take about a mile of shelf. The

reading room will, in proportion, require something like a length of way of ten miles, with a double line of rail for the convenience of readers passing to the various literary stations, conducted by a system of cheap return-tickets. Taking up *The Times* in 2060, one may read an account of a fearful accident to a party of students proceeding to the Divinity Station on the Reading Room railway, arising from a collision with a book-train. To imagine that anything short of an apparatus of this extent will suffice for the literature of that day, always supposing that the present productive rate is maintained, appears to be visionary.

From this nonsense the reader,—if I have one,—will gather that I have been fishing for an excuse to perpetrate this little volume, but that the bait has been lost, and the hook irretrievably ruined, by a haul of useless weeds, videlicet, the rubbish just shot here.

St. Mary's Place, West Brompton,

October, 1860.

"A WANDER-WIT of Wiltshire, rambling to Rome to gaze at antiquities, and there screwing himself into the company of antiquaries, they intreated him to illustrate unto them that famous monument in his country called Stonage. His answer was, he had never seen nor heard of it; whereupon they kicked him out of doors, and bade him go home and visit Stonage."—JOHN GIBBONS.



NORTH WALES.



ALL this a lake?"—observed an Australian friend, while we were standing on the picturesque little rustic bridge below the inn at Capel Curig;—"call this a lake?—why, we pass twenty such in a day in our country, and heed them no more than we should so many ponds."

It is curious, or, rather, perhaps it is not curious. What I mean is that it is not curious that at first sight, where grandeur is wanting in scenery, beauty should not be immediately appreciated; but it is curious that nearly all of us, especially of those who

have seen some of the grander natural monuments of the world, should despise the more beautiful allocations of nature when they are upon a somewhat diminutive scale. So say some,—“it is all very well, but Wales will not do after Switzerland.” You might just as well throw Pope behind the fire, because Pope won’t do after Shakespeare. Comparisons, as a wise man once said, are odorous. There is really but little to compare, each is so different and so agreeable in its kind. We do not see the grandeur of Switzerland in any part of Wales, it is true; but we see beauty, in its kind, developed in great variety, and of a style yielding perhaps more constant delight than in any part of the Continent. The Vale of the Conway is inferior, as a whole, to the Valley of the Rhine; but it has beauties of its own that would be sought for in vain on the banks of that noble river. Thus, for example, as to the far-famed Seven Mountains, one need not travel far in Wales without meeting with spot upon spot far more striking and beautiful. And the

same may be said in regard to many of the vaunted attractions of the Continent. But, as was just observed, comparisons are odorous; and North Wales should be studied for itself and by itself.

If, then, we would desire to appreciate Wales as it deserves to be appreciated, let us in the first place banish from our minds a desire to have our senses astonished by mere exhibitions of magnitude. Let us try to believe that the American was retorting truthfully when, in reply to the alleged superiority of Mont Blanc, he asserted that there were mountains near New York so high that they became quite offensive in summer. With some, nothing will pass unless it is of some enormous height, width, or depth. The larger a mountain is, the more deserving of our sympathy; until, by-and-bye, no mountains in the world will be sufficiently high to enable our tourists to create a sensation by ascending them, or even to gratify their morbid love of excitement by overcoming the difficulties attendant on the task. As a kind of gymnastic exercise the

passion is all very well ; and the men who can accomplish such feats may so fit themselves for nobler and more useful actions ; but let not the votaries of glaciers throw cold water, I mean ice, on the humbler followers of the lesser beauties of nature, those who are contented with the ascent of trumpery hillocks barely three or four thousand feet high, and who are simple enough to fancy that they can discover beauties in lakes, albeit these may not be inland seas, in waterfalls something smaller than those of Niagara, and in mountains even so insignificant as those of the Eryri.

The late Albert Smith, in one of his novels, has thus graphically described the effects resulting from the yearning after what may be termed the exciting grandeur of nature :—" A man sees Niagara for the first time, and shouts with rapture, or is speechless with admiration. The next day he thinks it simply a very fine fall. The next week it does not appear to tumble half so grandly as it did ; and he wishes the water would come down in another fashion.

Unless, like a fire-work, it alters its effects every minute, he wearies of it. And yet it is as grand as ever;—the same volume is pouring forth,—the same iris of brilliant light encompasses it,—it sparkles and flashes as of old. But he measures the sensation only by the first effect it produced; and unless it can, in itself, exceed this by some new and utter convulsion of its nature, it is no more worth regarding.” The effects of Niagara falls depend on their magnitude. Those of many an insignificant streamlet, such as are those at Nant Mill, make a more charming picture, and one of more enduring power of giving pleasure. Bear something of these considerations in mind; let not the want of great magnitude prevent a calm and just observation; and the charms of North Wales will grow upon us day by day, ever yielding new combinations to surprise and delight.

There is yet another consideration, a very practical one, why some of us should be content to devote our summer holidays to ramble through the

many beautiful localities of our native land. It is because, if they are not so content, they must stay at home. It is not given to all to have purses long enough, or to be so free from engagements, as to enable them to pass a vacation in Norway or Switzerland; nor, in company with children, would it be always desirable or agreeable to do so. Now, gentle reader, I am what it is the fashion now-a-days to call *paterfamilias*; and with a family party, eight in number, find that money goes quite fast enough even when we are content to ensconce ourselves for the summer at a moderate distance from home in quiet lodgings, selecting places whence we can ever and anon have a good tramp over the hills and far away, breathing semi-mountain air, content to dine in gipsy fashion by the side of a rivulet, or of a lake, even of one which would be thought a pond at the Antipodes. So then let us have a summer on the northern coast of North Wales; and as soon as we have explored one locality, let us take the rail to the next. It will be hard if we cannot

find something worth seeing between Chester and Carnarvon, aye and something worth noting too, notwithstanding that this part of the country is so much frequented and annually visited by thousands of tourists, not a few of whom are bent on taking notes and printing them. A book is a book, &c. I won't complete the line, or there may arise an ill-natured remark of small flattery to the penner of these pages. Suffice it to say, we, and the "we" include a daughter not yet twelve, are bent on walking excursions over hill and dale, through forest and flood, such as are to be met with anywhere within twenty miles of the railway line stretching from Chester to Carnarvon. I mention the age of the youngest of the party who joined in these excursions, as some guide to others as to the want of difficulty attending them. At the same time, some routes are described which should not be too rashly undertaken in all weathers, or without due care. Lives are often placed in jeopardy by underrating dangers, and there are few places in which they

may be so easily lost as in some parts of Wales. More persons perished on Snowdon last year than upon Mont Blanc.

Chester is the chief point of departure for the tourist into North Wales. This city has been so often and so well described, it would be presumption to fancy one can say anything new; and yet it cannot be dismissed without an allusion to its walls, its old houses, its crumbling churches, and its singular rows; the latter alone being sufficient to render it one of the quaintest old towns in England. We here take the "line" for the Principality. The first place reached of any note is Flint, fourteen miles from Chester. It is a mean town, only of interest to the tourist, from the fragment still preserved of its ancient castle, which was dismantled by order of Parliament in 1647. Taylor, the water-poet, gives the following dolorous account of the castle and town, as they appeared in the year 1652:—"On Fryday the 30. of July, I rode (and footed it) ten miles to Flint (which is the shire town of Flint-

shire), and surely war hath made it miserable; the sometimes famous castle there, in which Richard the Second of that name, king of England, was surprised by Henry of Bullinbrook, is now almost buried in its own ruins, and the town is so spoiled, that it may truly be said of it, that they never had any market (in the memory of man). They have no sadler, taylor, weaver, brewer, baker, botcher, or button maker; they have not so much as a signe of an alehouse, so that I was doubtfull of a lodging, but (by good hap) I hapned into the house of one Mr. Edward Griffith, where I had good meat and lodging for me and my dumb Dun beast, for very reasonable consideration, and this (me thinks) is a pitifull discription of a shire town." What now remains of the castle is a mere shell, and would be unworthy of preservation, were it not for the interesting historical associations connected with it, and for certain architectural peculiarities said to be still capable of identification.

We see enough of Flint from the rail, so, hey,

presto, for Holywell ! And hey, presto, out of it, too, as soon as we can ; for of all the specimens of a locality, beautiful in regard to its natural position and its remains of ancient architecture, rendered absolutely repulsive by squalor and dilapidated manufactories, this is surely one of the most conspicuous. I am speaking not of the town of Holywell, but of the descending valley between St. Winifred's Well and the sea. In the fifteenth century, when the chapel of the Well was in its pristine condition, and the powerful stream gushed unpolluted down the vale, turning but one mill, a picturesque one for corn, passing the calm retreat of Basingwerk Abbey amidst the green meadows in the lower ground, it must have been a place worthy of a photograph. Now-a-days the less that is said about it the better. The spring itself, however, was, is, and ever must be, one of the wonders of Wales. It rushes with constant impetuosity out of the rock, at the rate of eighty-four hogsheds every minute, and is received into an elegant polygonal well, canopied by a rich

arch supported by pillars, the whole enclosed in a beautifully formed building of a square form, open on the side towards a large stone reservoir, formerly the consecrated bath. An ancient chapel over the well, erected by the pious mother of Henry the Seventh, is now used as a Sunday-school. The blood-spotted stones, painful relics of the assassination of the saint, are no longer to be seen; the constant bathing having disturbed the natural character of the basin. Nor is the spot rendered more picturesque by the crutches left in the fretted roof, memorials of wondrous cures here effected.

Higden, the chronicler of the fourteenth century, mentions the well as then an object of pilgrimage. Its reputation has continued, with some fluctuations, from that early period to the present day. The Reformation appears to have had little effect on the attention paid to it. The holy wells throughout Wales were very much frequented in Elizabeth's time. The writer of a letter, written about 1590, says, "they doe still in heapes goe one pilgrimage

to the wonted welles and places of superstition, and in the nightes after the feastes when the ould offerings weare used to be kepte at anie chappell, albeit the church be pulled down, yet doe they come to the place where the church or chappell was by greate jorneyes barefoote." These pilgrimages continued in the following century. The authorities of the Government in the year 1617 took "order for the suppressing of superstitious flocking and resort unto Holliewell, comonly called Saint Winifred's well, and for dailie service and praiers there, as also for sermons on Sabothes and festivall daies, and that the oath of supremacie and allegiance be tendred unto all such strangers, before they goe to the well, as shall refuse to come to the church; by reason whereof the great concurse of people thither is stopped."

Honest John Taylor, the sculler of the Thames, who visited Holywell in the year 1652, has left us the following quaint account of it,—“Saturday, the last of July, I left Flint, and went three miles to

Holy-well, of which place I must speak somewhat materially. About the length of a furlong, down a very steep hill, is a well (full of wonder and admiration); it comes from a spring not far from Rudland castle; it is and hath been many hundred yeares knowne by the name of Holy-well, but it is more commonly and of most antiquity called Saint Winifrids well, in memory of the pious and chaste virgin Winifrid, who was there beheaded for refusing to yield her chastity to the furious lust of a pagan prince: in that very place where her bloud was shed, this spring sprang up; from it doth issue so forcible a stream, that within a hundred yards of it, it drives certain mills, and some do say that nine corn mills and fulling mills are driven with the stream of that spring. It hath a fair chappell erected over it, called Saint Winifrids chappell, which is now much defaced by the injury of these late wars. The well is compassed about with a fine wall of free-stone; the wall hath eight angles or corners, and at every angle is a fair stone pillar,

whereon the west end of the chappell is supported. In two severall places of the wall there are neat stone staires to go into the water that comes from the well, for it is to be noted that the well it selfe doth continually work and bubble with extream violence, like a boiling cauldron or furnace, and within the wall, or into the well, very few do enter. The water is christalline, sweet and medicinable; it is frequented daily by many people of rich and poore, of all diseases, amongst which great store of folkes are cured, divers are eased, but none made the worse. The hill descending is plentifully furnished (on both sides of the way) with beggers of all ages, sexes, conditions, sorts and sizes; many of them are impotent, but all are impudent, and richly embrodered all over with such hexameter poudred ermins (or vermin) as are called lice in England."

In 1667, note is taken in the account-book of a churchwarden of one of the midland counties, of sixpence paid "to Katherine Jones, coming with a

pass from London to travel to Winifred's well." In 1686, James the Second honoured the well with a pious visit, receiving in return for his condescension a present of the shift in which his great grandmother, Queen Mary of Scotland, was said to have been executed ; and about the same time, as appears from the Prologue to Ravenscroft's alteration of Titus Andronicus, 1687, a pilgrimage to the saint was made by the exceedingly less pious actresses of the Theatre Royal. The town, early in the following century, is described by De Foe as very Catholic,—“ There is a little town near the well, which may indeed be said to have risen from the confluence of people thither ; for almost all the houses are either publick houses, or let into lodgings ; and the priests who attend here, and are very numerous, appear in disguise. Sometimes they are physicians, sometimes surgeons, sometimes gentlemen, and sometimes patients, or anything as occasion presents. Nobody takes notice of them as to their profession, though they know them well enough,

no, not the Roman Catholicks themselves ; but in private, they have their proper oratories in certain places, whither the votaries resort ; and good manners has prevail'd so far that no Protestant, let him know what he will, takes notice of it, or inquires where one goes, or has been gone."

Dr. Johnson, who passed through Holywell in 1774, mentions that the stream even then turned no fewer than nineteen mills. The worthy moralist with his party visited the well, but was shocked at the indecency of the devotees, for, "a woman bathed while we all looked on ;" a rather good observation, considering that they need not have "looked on" unless they had liked. The bathing is now conducted with strict propriety. In fact, the appearance of the building is ruined by a number of hideous bathing-boxes erected on the sides.

There was, and perhaps still is, a singular custom on the Sabbath at Holywell, which deserves notice. It is thus pleasantly described by Warner,—“Of local customs there is nothing particular, except an

unusual mode of summoning the inhabitants to church. This edifice is so situated that when the wind blows from the south or the south-west, the bell cannot be heard in most parts of the town. The parishioners, therefore, allow an annual stipend to a poor man to notify the hour of prayer on Sundays and holidays, which he does in the following singular manner. A leathern strap is suspended round his neck, and a large and heavy bell attached to it, which rests upon a cushion buckled over his knee. Thus accoutred, he traverses the town, jingling his bell, to the surprise of those who are unacquainted with the custom. A ridiculous circumstance happened in consequence of this practice a short time since. An honest Hibernian, who, in passing through Holywell, sojourned there a day to see its curiosities, was standing at the door of the inn when this ecclesiastical bellman paraded the streets in the exercise of his office ; the traveller, astonished at the sight, enquired of a fellow standing by, who had more shrewdness than good-nature,

the cause of it, and received for answer that it was to announce the arrival of an oyster-boat at the well. The credulous Milesian, who was very partial to this shell-fish, instantly hurried thither in order to make a first purchase; but found to his confusion, on enquiring for the vessel, that it was utterly impossible, from the situation of the place, any sort of boat should approach within a mile of it; a disappointment that was rendered still more painful by the gibes and jeerings of the attendants at the well."

Holywell should not be left without paying a visit to the ruins of ^{St.}Basingwerk Abbey, which are passed in the way to and from the well. They belong to the large class of objects which are worth seeing, but not worth going to see. The ruins, situated in a meadow about half-a-mile from the coast, would be picturesque in themselves were not the appearance of the locality spoilt by the requirements of manufactures. They consist of a small portion of the Abbey Church, a fragment of the

chapter-house, the refectory, and some remnants of the monastic barn.

Our destination is Rhyl, now a large watering-place situated in a sterile district of the otherwise beautiful vale of Clwyd. A quarter of a century ago it was little more than an unenclosed common, and at first sight it seems difficult to account for the causes of its rapid progress. It has no walks, no good drives, no trees, no flowers, nothing of the picturesque, excepting the views of the mountains in the distance ; it is situated on a dead flat, and moreover it is half choked with dry and flying sand ; but it has beautiful air, good bathing, fine sands, and has the great advantage of cheap and easy access from Liverpool by sea. Rhyl is a chapelry in the parish of Rhuddlan. In 1811, it consisted of a few scattered dwellings, the population numbering only 252, and it was not until about the year 1828 that the place showed any symptoms of prosperity. From that time to the present it has continued in a rapid course of progress, until now it takes its place

as one of the principal towns on the coast of North Wales.

When I said that there was nothing of the picturesque at Rhyl, there should have been excepted the spectacle of some of the fisherwomen, who with nets on their shoulders, blue gowns reaching to their knees, and naked feet, trudging on the sands early on a summer's morning carolling Welsh songs,—they should only have been seen on the continent by some of our sentimental travellers, and we should have had a page or two of romantic description. I can only observe that to see and hear them added a charm to the attractions of the sands of Rhyl. To write eloquently on such or any matters is beyond my capacity ; but this is the less to be regretted as to the present volume, the authors of the well-known local guide-books excelling in this difficult species of composition. From one of these I cannot resist the pleasure of extracting the following graphic and powerfully written account of a sun-set as seen from this shore. It will

express the emotions attendant on a scene we frequently witnessed during our stay at Rhyll, in language befitting the grandeur of the subject; and will well make amends for my own shortcomings:—

“The great object of attraction, however, was the Sun,—setting in a flood of golden beauty on his evening throne. How few understand that the great luminary of the firmament, whose activity daily influences their every moment, is an immoveable orb, actuating the planetary system, and forming the shadow of a great dial which measures the thread of life, the existence of nations, and the cycle of the world’s change; it is the centre of our solar system,—the lamp that lights it,—the fire that heats it,—and the sceptre that guides and controls it.

“Every eye was intensely fixed upon the Great Light as he gradually sank in the western skies. He broadened by degrees, and as he approached the wave, his tinge changed successively to a brilliant red, and became more tolerable, and his form more distinct, exhibiting the appearance of an immense ball of fire, burning like the seal of God upon the close of day, putting the sky and the ocean into a perfect blaze of the brightest rose colour, which brought to our mind that fine passage in Revelations,—“a sea of glass mingled with fire,” producing one of the most splendid spectacles we ever saw. As his chariot wheels seemed to hover on the utmost verge of the sky, the shifting clouds, like a richly gorgeous train, assembled gay in all their pomp to attend his even-

ing throne ; they were steeped in the rainbow's richest dyes ; the beautiful tints of crimson and flame colour which they displayed, and which were strongly contrasted with the deep blue of the sea, and the brighter, but equally beautiful, blue of the sky were most remarkable. More remote, the attendant clouds were faint and scattered, as though overawed by the glory that beamed upon them, or fearful to intrude on retiring majesty. The King of Day now appeared to rest his resplendent rotundity upon the ocean ; and hiding his face in a paradise of clouds, he gave one bright smile, then sank in splendour beyond the mystic west.

"There was in the immediate neighbourhood of the sun foot-prints of glory, entrancingly beautiful. For some time after his disc had disappeared, large tracts of pale translucent green, surpassing every effort of paint, or glass, or gem. Nature was sensible of his absence,—heaven and earth put on sackcloth,—and creation mourned the monarch of the skies."

During our stay at Rhyl, the sackcloth was generally thrown off the next morning. In other words, we had beautiful weather, and could well appreciate the really fine vale of Clwyd. This luxuriant valley, appropriately called by the Welsh Dyffryn Clwyd, the Vale of the Flat, extends from the sea, its widest part, to beyond Ruthin, a distance of twenty-four miles, a range of hills being on each side of the level country. The most conspicuous

object is the mountain of Moel Famma, about twenty miles distant to the left. It is 1852 feet in height, and is easily distinguished by the jubilee tower erected on the top of it in 1809, to commemorate the fiftieth year of the reign of George the Third. The vale for the most part retains its ancient character for fertility. Thomas Churchyard, nearly three centuries ago, in his *Worthines of Wales*, 1587, thus speaks of it:—

This vale doth reach so farre in vewe of man,
As he farre of may see the seas indeede;
And who a while for pleasure travayle can
Throughout this vale, and thereof take good heede,
He shall delight to see a soyle so fine,
For ground and grasse a passing plot devine;
And if the troth thereof a man may tell,
This vale alone doth all the rest excell.

Our first excursion from Rhyl is to the village of Dyserth, where the chief attraction was, ought, and may hereafter be, one of the most singular cascades of the kind in the kingdom. The stream that rises at Ffynnon Afaph, afterwards mentioned, falls here

into a perpendicular cylindrical passage in the rock, darkened with moss and ivy ; or, rather, it should fall here, but the water is at present chiefly diverted into a neighbouring mine. One of my daughters, though she got laughed at for the apparent bull, not inaptly entered it in her diary as “ a waterfall with no water in it.” And this is literally the case. Instead of a powerful stream rushing over the precipice, the appearance now presents rather that of a dropping-well. It is beautiful, however, even in its defolation of water.

Dr. Johnson does not mention Dyferth by name, but there can be no doubt that this was the spot he visited in 1774, which is thus mentioned in his Welsh journal,—“ We then went to see a Cascade. I trudged unwillingly, and was not sorry to find it dry. The water was, however, turned on, and produced a very striking cataract. They are paid an hundred pounds a year for permission to divert the stream to the mines. The river, for such it may be termed, rises from a single spring, which, like

that of Winifred's, is covered with a building." The "they" the Doctor alludes to were the owners of a water-mill to the right hand of the cascade, to turn which a small portion of the stream is artificially carried down the side of the hill.

About a mile from the village, on a high rock amidst the hills near the road to Newmarket, are the remains of Dyferth Castle. Leland thus alludes to it, giving it a derivation that may suit the village, but not the castle,—“Thifarte, or Disarte, castelle yn Flyntshire, by the name yn Walsche is thus expounded: *Thi* is, not; *Sarte* is, stepe up. Not stepe or clining up, that is to say, playne.” This castle was destroyed as early as 1261, and what now remains of it is very insignificant. The views from this spot over the vale of Clwyd are very fine. In a field a little to the south is an old ruined building called Siambre Wen, the White Chamber, of the history of which nothing appears to be known.

There is a pleasant walk after passing Dyferth Castle to St. Asaph's well and Newmarket. The

former is reached by taking a turning to the right a little before arriving at Newmarket, keeping still to the right along pretty winding country lanes, and a finely wooded dell, near the last of which, on the brow of a small hill to the right, is Ffynnon Afaph. This well ranks next to that of Holywell in its volume of water, throwing up no less than seven tons every minute. It is enclosed with stone, in a rectangular form, and, according to Pennant, had formerly its votaries, like that of St. Winifred. The stream of water is of singular clearness and purity, and, when an adjacent mill is not at work, it forms a pretty inclined cascade, about forty yards from its source. This is the same stream which is seen at the waterfall at Dyferth, whence it runs through the vale joining the Elwy at a short distance below Rhuddlan.

There is little of interest in the neighbouring village of Newmarket. An ancient ornamented cross in the churchyard, of the fourteenth century, is worthy of notice. The church itself is a modern

structure. There are two small inns, one of them, although modernized, being probably of some antiquity. It has the only specimen I have seen in this part of the country of those old polished, dark, and slippery staircases so common at Antwerp and at some other places on the continent. The other tavern is a good example of the one-parloured house of entertainment once so universal in the country, and now so rapidly being superseded. Here we had all the resources of the house placed in requisition for refreshment, which resulted in a display of excellent bread and butter and cheese, exceedingly acceptable after a long walk, and which I believe we all enjoyed far more than we should have done a set luncheon at any of the grand hotels which are now springing up in North Wales, bringing the very essence of expensive cockneydom down into localities which should breathe only of pure air and humble fare. Moreover, we were surrounded by treasures of art. In the corner, shelves of china elaborately displayed; on the walls, samplers adorned with

useful and really well-selected sentences from Scripture ; and—incongruous in its juxtaposition—a large oil painting of Venus rising from the sea, her nudity only relieved by the introduction of two large modern ear-rings. It may be truly affirmed that one might search all the galleries of Europe without meeting with such a picture as that. There was a fascination in its very stupidity and grotesqueness, which rivetted my attention in a similar manner, but perhaps in a greater degree, than a sight of those sputters of red paint they show at Kensington for high works of art by Turner.

Near the village, on the summit of a hill called Gop, is an enormous tumulus, upwards of eight hundred feet in circumference. Part of the brow of the hill is cally Bryn y Saethan, or the hill of arrows, possibly from a battle fought near this spot. Near this is Bryn y Lladdfa, the hill of slaughter ; and Pant y Gwae, the hollow of woe. The locality was, at some very ancient period, one immense cemetery, as is proved by the large number of

sepulchral tumuli that have been opened at various times in this neighbourhood. The tumulus above mentioned is probably the largest in North Wales. From the summit there is a magnificent view of the neighbouring counties, extending over the estuaries of the Dee and Mersey to a large portion of Cheshire and the coast of Lancashire.

Every visitor to Rhyl goes to St. Afaph, Denbigh, and other set places for excursions. We are on the look out for the picturesque and the curious, so, instead of following in the herd, take the rail to Trefnant, whence there is a short and charming walk to the comparatively little known Ffynnon Vair, or St. Mary's Well. The most agreeable path is by the banks of the river turning to the left immediately after passing over the bridge that spans the Elwy about a mile from Trefnant. At a farm-yard, where a turn in the river forms a pool in which the trout are disporting themselves by dozens, turn through the fields to the right, and, shortly regaining the road, pass on one side of a wooded valley,

turning again on reaching a mill, and, in a few minutes, Ffynnon Vair, seated in a luxuriant meadow on the brow of a hill, appears in sight. This holy well pours forth a small stream of water that runs down into the Elwy. The shrine-work which covered it has disappeared, but a small portion of the adjacent cruciform chapel, although a mere ruin, still remains, nearly covered with ivy, and embosomed in trees, the whole in a most secluded spot. The ruins appear to belong to a building of the fifteenth century. It is curious that, some time after the Reformation, this place should have been a kind of Gretna Green. Here runaway couples were married. In a register still preserved may be remarked several entries similar to the following:—
“1611. Mem. thatt upon Fridaye at night, happening upon vij. daye of Februarie, one Pyers Gryffith ab Inn Gryffydd, my brother in lawe, was married clandestinely with one Jane vch Thomas hys second wieff at the chappel at Wicwer called Capel Fynnon Vair.”

There is a charming walk, after passing this ruin, along the high banks that overhang the stream, the channel of which generally appears in summer so much wider than the body of water requires. No doubt in floods here is a powerful river, covering all that usually appears strand; but, in all seasons, this part of the Elwy, dashing by the side of lofty wooded rocks, is romantic and beautiful. We continued our walk some distance beyond the bend of the river, passed a rustic wooden bridge erected at a considerable elevation over the stream, pursuing our path through a thickly wooded dingle by the river side. This upper course of the Elwy is well worth following.

Another day's walk to Rhuddlan Castle. This is the great antiquarian attraction to the Rhyl visitors, being the only ruin of any importance in its immediate neighbourhood. It is so well known, and has been so often described, that, as I am not writing a guide-book, it is unnecessary to enter into its history or present condition. It was of great

strength, as sufficiently appears from the vestiges of it still remaining. A writer of the time of Richard the Second observes that "it is very strong, because the sea comes into the fosses, and on the other side it is posted very loftily upon a rock ; its walls are strong and thick, well provided with large towers." Some of these towers still remain. This castle was taken by the Parliament forces in 1646, and ordered to be dismantled. Taylor, the water-poet, who visited it in 1652, speaks of it then as "an old, ruined, winde, and war-shaken castle."

In Rhyl itself there is nothing that has the appearance of antiquity. A new town in the far west of America could hardly exhibit a more exclusively modern appearance. I looked in vain for a remnant of what Rhyl once was ; and yet it seems there was one if I had only followed my nose a little way out of the town. This is described as Ty-yn-Rhyl, "the house of Miss Lloyd, part of which was built in the latter portion of the seventeenth century, and, within the memory of the present generation,

the only dwelling-house in the place." This means, I presume, the only substantial house. There were no doubt scattered fishermen's huts and the like, such as are still to be seen on the east side of Rhyl. The carved wood-work of the mantel-piece in the entrance-hall was made out of the bedstead of Griffith, the Gentleman-usher to Catharine of Aragon.

Abergele is the next watering-place to Rhyl. This small town is situated on a gently rising ground three quarters of a mile from the shore. Near the beach is the rising bathing hamlet of Penfarn, this name implying that it was the head of a Roman road. *Pen* is head in Welsh, and the term *farn*, a causeway, is generally connected with traces of a Roman road. It is situated on a dead flat, and with the inconvenience of being compelled to cross the railway line on a level in order to reach the sea. Penfarn at present consists of a few terraces and rows of houses. Fifteen years ago there were only two cottages here. One of these, Penfarn Cottage,

may thus be considered the antiquity of the place. There are scarcely any shops, the visitors being supplied chiefly from perambulating wooden sheds. The sands here are very fine and good, and a walk along them of three miles to Foryd is unequalled in its way. The land, at some distant period, extended far beyond the present beach. An epitaph at Abergele, of uncertain antiquity, records the burial of a man "who lived three miles to the north." It is difficult to believe that any one lived three miles to the north of Abergele at any time within the probable era of a recorded epitaph. At the same time, traces of a submerged forest are distinctly to be traced in the long tract of hard loam exhibited on this beach at low water. There are masses of decayed wood and leaves; and in one spot we observed the remains of a tree of twenty-five feet in height, the trunk and branches being traceable very clearly. The wood was sufficiently soft to be easily cut with a knife.

Abergele seems to have been an uncouth place

some century ago. An old sailer, who visited it in September, 1769, gives the following quaint account of the reception he met with,—“ We came to an anchor in the very midst of the harbour of Abergele about 2 o'clock P. M. At a distance it made a tolerable appearance, from whence we all expected better anchorage than was to be found in that place; in short, it was by much the worst part we had on the whole cruise. If ever I should by chance be driven by stress of weather upon any part of the coast, I shall endeavour to avoid coming to an anchor if possible in that harbour, yet the natives have as much politeness as them who are bred up in Peru or Nova Zembla. We dined at one of the principal taverns, which had for a sign a man upon a goat, with some kind of an animal under its belly, they said it was a dragon; what I thought had been the goat I found they called a horse, and the man that rode thereon was St. George. Ay, ay, they said, that was St. George, indeed truth it was, and that he did kill a great dragon. By this time our

appetites began to be uneasy, and certainly would have proclaimed war against the bowels, had not a large detachment of eggs and bacon appeared on the table. I should not call it a detachment; it was the whole body that could be mustered in that quarter, and a very formidable appearance they made; they were drawn up, not in rank and file, but in the form of a pyramid upon a large piece of clay (an earthen dish), in the form of a circle, but in such a confused heap, there was no distinguishing one from the other, the whole having the appearance of nothing but a rotten carcase. To tell you the plain truth, they were tumbled together in such a hotch-potch manner, that, and the aspect of the cook, which was by no means inviting, curbed my appetite pretty much, so I did not fall in amongst them — however, some of my comrades made terrible havock amongst them, in particular our commodore, who after he had demolished them in a very surprising manner, would have made you or any one else to have laughed at him, to see how he

tipped them about the dish with his fork, declaring they were not fit to be eat. I am still of his opinion, for I firmly believe most of the eggs were rotten. I dined upon bread and butter, as they called it, for cheese there was not any ; what butter I eat might have been dug out of the salt mines at Northwich, for its relish, beside it had a very fine aromatic smell and flavour, too, which, I suppose, might be owing to the cleanliness of the dairymaid, most of the females all upon this coast bearing a very near resemblance to the people called Hottentots. Finding no better accommodation in this harbour, you may be sure our stay was not long." Five years later, in 1774, Dr. Johnson describes Abergele as "a mean town, in which little but Welsh is spoken, and divine service seldom performed in English." It could not have been many years after this before it came into repute as a watering-place, for Aikin, in 1797, says that it was then "much frequented in the bathing season, though people of fashion in general prefer Park-gate."

Abergele itself is a small old rambling town, situated on a little rivulet, though one unfortunately of small beauty. It should be called the river Gele, but it does not appear to be sufficiently important to deserve a name ; and Leland so conjectured some four centuries ago, when, speaking of this town, he adds, “ where be likelihood is a water caullid Gelle.” The Welsh name Abergele means literally, the woody rivulet ; and the stream that passes the town issues out of deep wooded ravines a little way beyond, amidst which are several very pleasant walks, though ones little frequented. It is difficult to say anything of interest about the town itself. An old inn, the Ship, with its ancient penthouse, just such a one as Dogberry and his staff sheltered under, took my fancy the most ; and it is hardly necessary to say that my nephew and myself went in to beer, when, in admiring its quaintness, the following irresistible invitation over the door, in English and Welsh, was seen in bold relief,—

In this place there is a vault ;
Such liquors is ever fixed :

Water, hops, and malt,
Ever better mixed !

There are numerous pretty walks on the hills above Abergele. The best is perhaps that on the one called Castell Cawr, an ancient fortified hill. The forms of the defences are now greatly obscured by plantations. The only relic of antiquity of much interest hereabouts is the Roman mine, a deep trench cut right through the hill, instead of a shaft being made, as in more recent times. This mine is on the side of Castell Cawr, a raised modern pathway having been formed across it. The ancient trench is, in some parts, of amazing depth. It is, or was, called by the Welsh, Ffos-y-bleiddiaid, or the ditch of the wolves. According to a local guide-book,—“ In driving a level into the mountain, some years ago, the miners discovered that the Romans had been deep in the bowels of the earth before them. They had followed the vein, where it was large enough to admit of a small man, and where it opened out into a larger chamber, they

had cleared it quite away. When the vein became too small to admit a man, they were obliged to relinquish the ore. Some curious hammers and tools, but almost decayed into dust, were found in these chambers; also the golden hilt of a Roman sword."

There is a long but beautiful walk, after passing the village of St. George, through a somewhat unfrequented part of the country to Llanfannan. The best road is that commencing up a hill on a turning to the right before reaching the former village; and then passing the Elwy over Pont Meredudd, about three miles and a half from St. George. Then take the first turning to the right, when a walk of a mile brings us to the junction of the Elwy with the Aled; the latter here rushing down to meet its less impetuous companion in a charming valley. This last part of the route is accessible only on horseback or on foot. Carriages must pass along an elevated road on the other side of the Elwy, and pass over Pont-y-Gwyddel, a bridge situated a few hundred yards below the junction of the rivers. This entire

valley reveals a succession of beautiful and varying prospects. The road follows the course of the Aled, passing over the stream at a bridge called Pont-yr-Aled, where the river hastens beautifully over an angular, rocky bottom, showing perhaps to greater advantage here than in any other part of its course. Between this spot and Llanfannan, although pretty in many places, the stream is too placid to create much observation. About two miles from Llanfannan it is joined by a pretty rivulet, termed Nant-y-Terfyn; and shortly afterwards is passed Dryffyn Aled, a large plain country house, the seat of the Yorke family.

Llyn Aled, the source of the river so called, is between six and seven miles from Llanfannan. The track, called by courtesy a road, is bad, through a very bleak, uninteresting country. It is nearly always raining about here; and our hosts, on our return to Llanfannan, was surprised to find that we had no occasion for the large fires and change of dress she had prepared, in full expectation of our

having been drenched on the mountains. We fancied that she felt disappointed at our return in a dry state rendering her preparations useless, as if it were an infringement of the rules of the neighbourhood to see Lake Aled without getting a ducking. About half-way there is a fine and perfect tumulus to the right of the road. The lake is situated amidst gloomy heathy hills, and is certainly in itself not worth the trouble of getting to it; but the river, after flowing about a mile and a half, suddenly reaches a fine ravine, down which it rushes over the nearly flat surface of a wide and high rock, forming in a flood a magnificent cataract. This ravine, which is far grander than could have been anticipated by any one taking the beaten road, is well worth following until the next fall, called Llyn Yr Oror, is reached, shortly after passing a beautifully wooded portion of the ravine. This is a small fall in comparison with the other, but it is one of rather a singular character. It is completely shaded by trees, the river falling into a dark cylindrical basin

at the bottom of a finely wooded dell. This is probably the gloomiest waterfall in Wales. If any of the early tourists had noticed it, we could hardly have failed to have had an eloquent comparison of it with Avernus.

Llanfannan is a small country village, very prettily situated, nestled amongst the hills. It is a good fishing station, the Aled abounding in trout. The church is a plain, low structure. There is a small inn, the "Saracen's Head," where we tasted, for the first time, chicken-and-rabbit pies; not chicken pies and rabbit pies, but pies constructed of the flesh of chicken and rabbit intermingled. And very good they were; though I should hardly be inclined to suggest their introduction into the beau ideal of a country-inn dinner, and which, after a variety of experiments, I conclude to be this,—videlicet, freshly caught trout, broiled fowl with mushroom sauce, and plum tart; a dinner, in the estimation of my primitive taste, if eaten with the roaring appetite induced by a twenty-mile stroll

over the mountains, unequalled in the list that can be selected by men with short purses. But the pies alluded to were very superior to the fare that the village afforded a century ago. I have before me a sailor's account of his visit there in September, 1769, and he gives a curious but doleful description of the entertainment then to be met with:—"The weather still continuing wet and hazy, about one o'clock, P.M., we came to an anchor in the town of Llanfannan, situated betwixt two exceeding high mountains. It is a small village containing about ten or twelve poor houses, with a church almost in ruins, close by which runs a very rapid meandering river. We put up at the sign of the 'Hand,' in the centre of the town; it looked an extreme good house in that part of the world—it was a Welsh house, with an English face, viz. a brick front. The house appearing so well on the outside, we expected to have found good accommodations within, but we were greatly disappointed. As for that they called ale, we could not drink it, by reason of the smoky

flavour; besides, the colour was very like what remains in the bottom of a vessel, (as to a cask, I verily believe it had never entered;) in short, it could scarce be called liquid; the solids were little better than the fluids; but, luckily, we found a piece of a good Cheshire cheese, upon which, with a large toast put into a bowl of water, we all dined very well. The water was quite pure, and fresh off the slates, for it rained prodigiously."

Of course it did. It always has rained at Llanfannan except on the day we outwitted our hosts by arriving dry from the Aled. Do not let any tourist calculate on meeting with the same luck. "Coachman," said my father, some half century ago, when travelling on the box over the Lancashire hills in a drenching storm, "it always rains here, does it not?" "Oh dear no, sir," replied this disciple of the whip, "it snaws sometimes." And something like this, if accounts are to be believed, is the case at Llanfannan, unless perhaps it occasionally hails.

We did not visit Bwrdd Arthur, although, if

still in its ancient state, it is worth notice, were it only on account of the many times it is named by our early writers as one of the curiosities of Wales. Leland, in the sixteenth century, thus describes it: —“There is in the paroch of Llanfannan, in the side of a stony hille, a place wher ther be 24 holes or places in a roundel for men to fitte in, but sum lesse and sum bigger, cutte oute of the mayne rok by mannes hand, and there childern and young men, cumming to feke their catelle, use to fitte and play. Sum caulle it the ‘Rounde Table.’ Kiddes use ther communely to play and skip from fete to fete.”

One of the most charming walks in the neighbourhood of Abergele is that to Llanfair Talhaiarn. It is only seven miles from Penfarn, but the route we selected was the somewhat discursive one through St. George, then passing the Elwy at Pont Meredith, and so onwards to Llanfair. The approach to it from this side, on the summit of the hills above Llanfair, is considerably finer than that from any

other, presenting a truly beautiful view ; the river is seen winding for miles between the tortuous hills, the Snowdon range being visible in the distance. Dine at the Black Lion Inn. The trout here is of a delicious flavour. We returned by the more direct route through country lanes, entering Abergele through the hamlet of Twll Llwynog, making a good day's walk, reckoning twistings and turnings, of about eighteen miles. The vale of Llanfair is exceedingly pretty, to judge from the walk we took on the south of the river as far as Henllys.

In a rock to the westward of Abergele, high above the road, after passing the large modern castellated mansion called Gwrych Castle, is a singular cavern termed Cefn Ogo, the entrance of which has not been inaptly compared to "the portal of a noble cathedral, arched, and divided within by what has the appearance of a great column." This cave seems never to have been thoroughly explored. It is said to be penetrable about forty yards, when further progress is arrested by a chasm or by water,

I could not with certainty ascertain which. The entrance is dirty and unpromising, and the large stalactites with which it abounds are neither fanciful nor brilliant. It is strange that no adventurous Welshman has yet penetrated the depths of this cavern, in defiance of the witch, who, according to local tradition, guards a vast treasure of gold at the very extremity of the cave. There is an absurd story told in the Month's Tour in North Wales, 1781, to the effect that four men, who attempted to explore the cavern, penetrated to a distance that required the consumption of three pounds of candles, and that two of the company were lost in its recesses.

Thomas Johnson, an enthusiastic botanist of the seventeenth century, visited this cave in 1639. The hill itself was, he says, called Garth Gogo, and the popular name of the cavern was Ogo Gumbyd, so styled after the giant Gumbyd, who was said to have been its original inhabitant. All traces of this tradition appear to be now lost. Johnson, who

cared more for wild flowers than for old tales, notes having found in the cavern specimens of the golden saxifrage and other plants.

The appearance of these hills has been very much altered in the last half century by the numerous plantations of trees with which it now abounds. Its previous bleakness excited the attention of the traveller. Thus, in a little hand-book called the Traveller's Companion from Holyhead to London, 1793, Gwrych is mentioned with the observation,—“whose bleak situation calls aloud for plantations to shelter it from the winter's blast.”

A little further to the westward is the very pretty village of Llandulas, situated in a vale at the entrance of a pass between the limestone rocks, the little stream Dulas passing through it in its way to the sea. This is a small rapid streamlet of considerable beauty; but, like all other Welsh rivers, the volume of water in it varies considerably at different times. Passing upwards along the valley, until the larger expanse of country is reached, the scenery is

very pleasing; but towards the mansion of Coed Coch, and in the walk to the small village of Bet-tws Abergele, the country becomes tame. After passing the church at Llandulas, take the turning to the left, and walk up the hill to Llysfaen, a village of some dozen scattered houses and a church, a plain structure with two aisles. From the telegraph station above the church are fine and extensive prospects.

This spot is only about a mile from the ridge of Penmaen Rhos, where, as I think, it clearly appears, from the contemporary Anglo-Norman narrative, the capture of Richard the Second, after he had left Conway, took place either on the summit near the sea, or just over it on the side near Llandulas. Northumberland had "formed his men into two bodies under the rough and lofty cliffs of a rock," leaving them there while he went to see the king at Conway; and it is afterwards stated that this rock was "washed by the main sea," which proves clearly that it was not the one at Cefn Ogo, so often stated as the locality of this remarkable historical event.

Richard was no doubt taken when passing along the ancient bridle path skirting Penmaen Rhos. "The king," says the contemporary narrative, "had come so near to them, that it was much further to return to the town than to descend the rock, which was washed by the main sea. We could not get away on the other side, owing to the rock; so that, cost what it might, we were forced either to die or to pass on into the midst of the body of the earl's people." According to another account, the king alighted from his horse to walk down the hill on account of its steepness. There is no other locality on this part of the coast that exactly tallies with the various circumstances recorded by this contemporary historian; so the rock of Penmaen Rhos has a special interest attached to it, even though our hand-books deem it hardly worth a passing notice. From this spot, the unfortunate sovereign of England proceeded to a sumptuous dinner prepared for him at Rhuddlan, the best of the later ones he was destined to enjoy.

Until within the last hundred years, the passage over this rock was one of the most troublesome on the north coast. Instead of there being, as at present, a good road at some distance behind the precipice, "the traveller," says Pennant, "went along a narrow path cut on its front, like the road on Penmaen Mawr, but infinitely more terrible and dangerous." This path, observes Wyndham, in 1774, "is so formidably narrow and unprotected, that few people dare trust themselves or their horses on it." A similar account is given by Dr. Johnson, who passed over it the same year:—"To spare the horrors at Penmaen Rhos, between Conway and St. Asaph, we sent the coach over the road cross the mountain with Mrs. Thrale, who had been tired with a walk sometime before; and I, with Mr. Thrale and Miss, walked along the edge, where the path is very narrow, and much encumbered by little loose stones, which had fallen down, as we thought, upon the way since we passed it before." Cradock, who passed over Penmaen Rhos in the autumn of

1776, describes it as “ by far the worst part of the road between Holyhead and Chester ;— a nearer path was some time since cut along the side of the sea-cliff, but a man and horse had lately been killed, and, by order of the commissioners, it is now entirely broken up.”

On the other side of Penmaen Rhos is the pretty bay and rural valley of Colwyn, one of the few spots where all the characteristics of the country are found up to the water-edge. Here are wooded glens, and numerous country walks. The small village, with its neat church, is at a short distance from the sea. But we were trudging along not to see Colwyn, but to have a peep at the celebrated curfing-well of Llanellian, a village higher up on the hills. Here is a plain church. In a corner of the churchyard is a fragment of an ancient cross. There are about a dozen houses in the immediate vicinity of the church, a few others being sparsely scattered about the parish. The views from this spot are good. Ffynnon Elian, the curfing-well, is

situated in some field about half-a-mile from the church, near the left-hand road which leads to Colwyn. Unfortunately, the well escaped our notice; nor were we aware of its exact locality until long after we had passed it; when, hot and tired, and being assured by an intelligent stranger that there were no characteristics about it worthy of observation, we made up our minds to pass on and leave well alone. It derives, indeed, its only interest from its being one of the places where obtained the barbarous custom of invoking the presiding saint to injure an enemy, who was at the same time cursed with a supposed peculiar effect. Pennant says that in his time the belief in the saint's power of inflicting vengeance was still strong. That accurate traveller, about 1770, "was threatened by a fellow, who imagined he had injured him, with the vengeance of St. Ælian, and a journey to his well, to curse him with effect." There is reason to believe that this wretched superstition is not yet quite obsolete. An intelligent Welsh writer in 1846 informs

us that "this is the most dreadful of all the wells, and the one in whose miraculous powers the peasants of the present day most fully believe. Persons who bear any great malice against others, and wish to injure them, frequently resort to the minister of the well, who for a sum of money undertakes to *offer* them in it. The penalty consists either in personal pain, or loss of property, as the offerer pleases. Various ceremonies are gone through on the occasion; amongst others, the name of the devoted is registered in a book—a pin in his name, and a pebble with his initials inscribed thereon, are thrown into the well. When the curse is to be removed, the ceremonies are to a certain extent reversed, such as erasing the name from the book, taking up the pebble, with several other practices of a superstitious character."

Leaving Abergele, the next principal starting-points for excursions are Conway and Llandudno. We select the latter, and perch ourselves at an Elizabethan-looking cottage, bearing the romantic

names of Tower View and Elwy Villa ; built on a ledge half-way up the Great Orme's Head, with views over the opposite country and the Carnarvonshire mountains on the right. These kind of places do not suit gouty folks, or invalids, or lazy people ; but, for health and pure air, always, at watering-places, choose the higher ground, if there is any. Llandudno is peculiarly situated. The large limestone rock of the Great Orme, nearly six miles in circumference, is surrounded by the sea, excepting on the south-east, at which point it is connected with the main land by a long narrow slip bounded on one side by the sea that flows over the Conway-falls ; and on the other, by the very beautiful Orme's Bay. It is on this neck of land, and on the brow of the Orme's Head, that the splendid new watering-place of Llandudno is now advancing, with rapid strides, to become eventually perhaps to the north coast what Brighton is to the south. It is thus so nearly surrounded by the sea, the ocean-breezes passing over it with nearly every direction

of the wind, that a lodging in Llandudno has not been inaptly compared to that in the berth of a ship, with all its advantages and none of its drawbacks. It seems impossible but that this should be a healthy place, with its fine air, and, in most parts, good drainage. Its chief defect is the want of shade, there scarcely being a tree to be seen nearer than at Gloddaeth. The town now stretches in terraces from the Great Orme about half-way along Orme's Bay, and there are several fine streets on the back and towards St. George's church, with houses scattered on the brow of the hill. No houses have yet been built on the side of Conway Bay. It is worthy of remark that, in most directions of the wind, the two bays may be said to have different climates; for, owing to the peculiar situation of the isthmus, when it is rough in one bay, it is generally calm in the other.

Llandudno has arisen out of obscurity only within a very few years. Twenty years ago it was a mere village; most of the dwellings in it consisting of

cottages built on the brow and under the cliff fronting the plain. Even as lately as 1848, there was nothing deserving the appellation of a street, though a number of scattered houses had been erected, most of them in the vicinity of St. George's church, which was built in 1840. At that time, there were only a few cottages on the Orme's Bay, which have since been removed to make way for the modern buildings. In the summer, however, of that year, numerous parcels of land were sold on building leases, and, from that period, the town has continued to make rapid progress. The aspect of Llandudno in past times was of a character very different to that it possesses at the present day. An old sailor, who visited it nearly a century ago, has given the following quaint description, one which would doubtless have applied to the locality in all essential particulars until within the last twenty years :—

MONDAY, Sept. 11th, 1769.—We went to Llanrhos, breakfasted at the gardener's house, whose name is Sanders, went into

the woods belonging to Gloddaeth and Boscatlin, returned to dinner, after which Commodore White and me were to take a ride, in order to reconnoitre the Great Orme's Head, which lay about a mile and half distance from us. This was done in order to prove whether it was or was not practicable to remove it altogether to Liverpool, which we found might be done very easy, though we had much ado to convince them in reality; however, we brought them over to our opinion, although they so strenuously affirmed the contrary over-night. The main difficulty that occurred to them now was this, that the mouth of the Mersey near the Black Rock would not admit the raft it was floated upon. Be that as it will, if we get it no further it may be left there. We had a pleasant ride along the gravilly beach of the sea, which, in that place, forms a semicircle betwixt the two Ormesheads, being about a mile distance from each other in a chord line. This mountain appearing, at a distance, like a rock in the sea, is a peninsula, nearly circular, about four miles in circumference. It has ten or twelve small houses, or huts, with very fruitful valleys on the south side; there is a church upon the north side, next the sea, founded upon the rock, very near the precipice, which is some hundred yards above the surface, and in many places almost perpendicular, against which the sea is always beating, making a hideous noise, so that it is really shocking to be near the declivity. The church and few houses mentioned before are an entire parish, called Llandudno. We left our horses at one of the cottages under the mount, and ascended the hill on foot, which is about a mile to the top; to have rode up was impracticable. We marched on, sometimes

over barren rocks, and rubbish out of the copper-mines, which lies there in great plenty; then we passed a small valley about the midway, with several inclosures of very fine corn, both barley and oats, and wheat I saw none. After passing this valley we came to a fine open plane, well stored with great numbers of fine large sheep, which are of a much larger kind than is commonly seen upon the adjacent hills; and they are reckoned the sweetest mutton in Wales. It is not much to be wondered at the mutton being so sweet, the grass being the thickest and the turf the finest I ever saw; and, were it not for, here and there, whins, brest or bracken, no bowling-green could equal it. Mr. Griffith assured me it afforded pasture for near two hundred sheep annually.

By this time we were got very near the summit, which was very steep, but covered with the same green turf; it terminated in a kind of round mound or hummock, not unlike Castle-cob upon the forrest of Delamere. Being arrived at the top of the hill or highest point of the Peninsula, we sat down to refresh ourselves, being a little fatigued with clambering up. We had rum and fruit in our pockets, which refreshed us much; we planted the stones of some fruit, particularly a nectarine. The mould was as rich as most gardens, but not quite so sheltered from winds. Our stay you may think was not long in that place. It remained to know the most expeditious way to descend, which was this—we lay flat on our backs, and slid down at a great rate; the natives have a more expeditious way than this. When they have a mind to descend a mountain with speed, they fix their backs upon a flat kind of stone, holding the forepart fast with both the

hands, betwixt the legs; then giving a spring, away they go, at the rate of a mile in a minute or more, according as the descent is. This is called "riding the stone-horse." We got upon our feet, and walked where the descent was not so steep; and before we arrived at the bottom, we were saluted by a youth (who came out of one of the huts) with a tune upon the German flute; which, by the height of the hill and the hollow rocks around us, causing an echo, made it the most delightful music imaginable. We made signs for the youth to come nearer to us, which at last he did, though with some reluctance; yet when we were able to make him understand his music was agreeable, and that he should have some *cwrw* for his civility to us, he seemed well-pleased. He had just English and we Welsh enough to understand one another, and a strange jargon there was betwixt us; but it happened very well we could make shift to converse a little. There was not one soul at the house where we left our horses could understand one word of English, although it was a public-house, and the principal one in the parish. Ask what questions you would to any of the people in the house, the answers were all alike affirmatives—*dim farcenik*.

We had only one pint of that liquor called ale, which was so strong that we could not drink it. However, had we called for a gallon, our Apollo, assisted by old Bacchus, would have sipped it cheerfully. The cream of the jest was this,—we had no copper to pay for it, and to exchange other metal in that remote part of the globe was impracticable. We made the old man understand by our interpreter (who was a very bad one) that we should be glad to see him in the morning at Gloddaeth, and assured him we

should be then able to pay for his liquor. We mounted our horses, and bore away for the above-mentioned port; it being a fine evening, and right before the wind, we arrived about eight o'clock, all well, drank two jugs of fine ale, which was good sauce to a toast of plated cheese; and after chatting a little while with the housekeeper, who was a sociable, clean, pretty, decent little Welsh woman, we went to bed, and slept very well.

The new town of Llandudno is built on land which was formerly, and until within a recent period, a marsh. Leland says, "This Commote (Credine) partely be Conwey ryver, partely by the Se, is yn a maner as insulatid, and one way owte of Denbigh land; the way is over a made causey, over a marsh often overflowen." There are persons still living in the neighbourhood, says Evans, writing about 1800, "who say they can remember when the present marsh, which forms the communication, was usually washed over by high tides."

There are scarcely any traces left of the old village. The most ancient cottage in the place is probably the small country inn, on the brow of the hill overlooking the present town, called the Miners'

Arms. It is an old cottage, with three gable windows in the roof, and one of those in which the inmates never run the risk of injuring themselves by falling down the stairs. It may probably be as old as the commencement of the last century. Another inn, a little lower down the hill, called the King's Head, although now modernized, is also probably of some antiquity.

The most interesting antiquarian remain in Llandudno, albeit much altered of late years, and injured by the working of limestone quarries on its side, is unquestionably the ancient fortified encampment called Pen y Ddinas, situated on the top of a large oval-shaped hill which overlooks Llandudno bay. It is of an inferior elevation to the Orme's Head, from which it is divided by a small hollow. The top, which occupies a considerable space, is nearly flat. The intrenchments on the sides are still traceable. In some parts it was defended by the natural cliff, improved perhaps in some places by art, for in one spot may still be noticed a small piece of dry

wall filling up a fissure in the rock. In the last century, the edge of the hill was surrounded with a rude wall. On the top were numerous circular houses about twelve feet in diameter, traces of an entire row of which are still visible on the western side. These houses are supposed to have been stone huts covered over something like beehives, and, from excavations that have been made, it would seem that the fire was made in the middle of the floor, traces of wood-ashes having been found mixed with the earth.

At one corner of the plateau on Pen y Ddinas is a Maen Sigl, a rocking-stone six feet long, two feet four inches wide, and two feet in depth. It may still be termed a rocking-stone, for, although mischievously thrown down about two years ago, it could and will no doubt be restored to its original position. According to Pennant, the point of contact with the ground was so small as to make it moveable with the least touch. The provincial name of it is Cryd Tudno, the Cradle of St. Tudno.

The antiquities on the Great Orme's Head are neither numerous nor of great importance. There is a small cromlech in the hollow ground just below the old mine, not far from a recently erected dissenting chapel. It consists of four upright blocks of stone, four feet and a half in height, supporting a large flat stone on the top. Like many other cromlechs, the four supporting stones are close together, leaving a wide open space four feet and a half in width for the reception of the sepulchral remains. There is nothing peculiar in it to distinguish it from the numerous other relics of the same kind still preserved in various parts of the country. The Welsh name of this cromlech is *Llety y filiaf*, the greyhound's kennel or the stone of the greyhound bitch. On the summit of the hill near the sea, a short distance to the westward of St. Tudno's, is an unnoticed early remain, a circular spot surrounded by a double narrow circle of sunken stones, one, in fact, of the curious antiquities usually called remains of British circular houses. In the same

neighbourhood are the remnants of two singular avenues of upright stones, placed diagonally to each other, forming, between two rows of stones, a walk in the shape of the letter L, one of the avenues descending towards the sea, the other parallel with it. Many of these upright stones have been unfortunately removed of late years, but a sufficient number of the smaller ones remain to enable the directions of the avenues to be traced. No plausible explanation of the character of these remains has been given; but avenues of stones have been found at Avebury, and in other places, leading to what are called Druidical circles. The Welsh call them *Hwyllfar Ceirw*, the high road of the deer, the tradition being that these stones formed a path by which those animals, formerly numerous in this county, descended to a meadow below. Near these are the remains of several rude dry stone walls, bearing the appearance of having belonged to the ground-floor of a large square stone building, the remains of some of the division walls being clearly

visible. This place is called Llety Fadog, or the house of Madoc, a supposed ancestor of Gloddaeth; but there does not appear to be any good evidence of its history or great antiquity. These few notices are all that is necessary of what a dealer might term the miscellaneous antiquities of the Great Orme. Of these, Hwylfar Ceirw is the most curious, and pity it is that it should have been so materially injured by the removal of the largest stones. It is to be hoped that what still remains of it will be carefully preserved. There is little doubt but that it is of remote antiquity, connected in some way with a circle or cromlech.

Leaving Hwylfar Ceirw, a few minutes' walk to the east brings us to the little church of St. Tudno, built in a small hollow on the top of the cliffs, but exposed to all the fury of the elements. This building was for many years in a dilapidated condition, but it has been recently restored, and may now still last for centuries. Mr. Longueville Jones, judging from the masonry, considers that part of it

belongs to the eleventh or twelfth century, and part, including all the architectural features of the edifice, to the fifteenth. There is a small circular font in the church of great antiquity, and near the altar are preserved two incised slabs or coffin-lids of the thirteenth century, possibly originally belonging to the lords of Gogarth. A wooden tablet, erected in 1732, records that Lewis Owen of Twickenham left the eighth part of the tithes of Conway to be expended in the purchase of wearing apparel for the aged poor of Llandudno. There is also the record of another bequest to the poor, made by Thomas Evans of Gogarth.

On the south-western side of the Great Orme is a narrow slip of cultivated land, upon which, near the sea, are some remains supposed to be those of what once was the residence of the bishop of Bangor. Leland, temp. Henry the Eighth, thus speaks of it,—“There is by Conway, on the hither side of Conway water, an arme like a peninsula, called Gogarth, lying against Priestholme, and ther

be the ruins of a place of the Bishops of Bangor." These ruins are now of a very insignificant character, consisting chiefly of the remains of a chimney, and the fragments of a few walls, one of which is preserved as high as the middle of the first story. The foundations of some of the apartments are traceable. In a loose dry field wall close by I noticed a small portion of what was anciently a fine stone column nine inches in diameter.

The sea-bound cliffs of this promontory have lost much of their ancient wild character, a good walking path having been formed entirely round the Head. The haunts of many of the sea-fowls have thus been disturbed, and Llandudno, once distinguished by its immense number of wild birds, is rapidly losing its interest to the ornithologist. Another cause of their diminution is the wanton destruction of them by the visitors, some of whom seem to take delight in shooting for the mere pleasure of destruction. To take away a life wantonly, even although it may be only that of a bird, destroys

the enjoyment of an entire world in respect of that life. When taken for food, or for purposes of science, it becomes a different matter ; and in this way I saved the credit of one of these pseudo-sportsmen, by picking up and having cooked the results of a double-barrelled discharge in the shape of a fine specimen of the *anas nigra*, the black diver or scoter, the *macreuse* of the French, one of the articles of food allowed by the Romish church to be eaten in Lent. It is a great diver, living almost always at sea, and is often seen in Conway bay. The flesh resembles in appearance that of wild duck, the flavour of it being somewhat peculiar, but without any offensive fishy taste. It is sometimes to be bought in the London market.

According to Pennant, who is speaking of the precipices of the western extremity of the Great Orme, "the gulls possess the lowest part ; above them the razor-bills and guillemots have their quarters ; over them croak the cormorants ; the herons occupy the highest regions ; and scattered in different

parts are a few puffins and black guillemots." A tourist, who visited Llandudno in 1837, thus describes the method then practised of getting their eggs,—“When very near the edge of the water, we met with a party of young men, who had just been gathering the eggs deposited by the gulls and razor-bills in the clefts and on the ledges of the rocks overhanging the sea. The expedient resorted to for obtaining possession of these eggs is extremely hazardous. The bold adventurer is let down by a rope which is fastened around his middle, and planting his feet against the sides, and carefully shifting his hands, he gradually arrives at the haunts of the birds. Having filled the basket, which is slung on his shoulder, he ascends to the summit of the cliff with the assistance of his partner, who is stationed above. This is a dangerous employment, and there are several instances on record, where, from the rope slipping, or other casualties, lives have been lost and the mangled bodies buried in the sea. I purchased six of the eggs for a shilling. Those of the razor-

bill and guillemots are reckoned great delicacies." The traffic in wild eggs at Llandudno has now nearly, if not quite, been relinquished.

Botanists fare no better than ornithologists, the wild plants of a rarer character being unmercifully poached upon. The rarest of all is the shrub called the *cotoneaster vulgaris*, the downy-leaved medlar, which has been discovered nowhere else in this country. The guide-books say that it is found on the rocks above the mines; but this is hardly a sufficient direction, and we had many a hunt without finding a specimen. Afterwards, we were referred to the cottage of a Mrs. Evans, above which we were assured that it would be seen growing in profusion. This information did not help the matter very much, nearly every other cottage being tenanted by a lady of that name; but at length our pains were rewarded by the discovery of the locality,—the rocks which are situated at some distance to the west of the old mine above the road which passes the farm-house of Tyn-y-cae. The

easiest way to it is to take the first turning to the left in going up the hill from the town to the old mine.

Old Gerard, the splendid botanist of Elizabeth's reign, to whose memory posterity has meted out yet but scanty justice, does not name this as an English plant; but it seems to be referred to in the following passage in his Herbal, fol. Lond. 1597, p. 1266,—
 "There is a dwarffe kinde of medlar growing naturally upon the Alpes, and hils of Narbone and Verona, which hath beene by some of the best learned esteemed for a kinde of medlar; others, whose judgements cannot stande with truth or probability, have supposed it to be *Euonimus*, of the Alpes; this dwarffe medlar groweth like a small hedge tree, of fower or five cubits high, bearing many small twiggie wandes or crops, beset with many slender leaves, greene above, and of a skie colour underneath, in shewe and to beholde a dwarffe apple tree, but the fruite is very like the hawe, or fruite of the white thorne, and of a red colour."

The plant was first observed at Llandudno by J. W. Griffith, of Garn, in the year 1783.

There are several caves in the cliffs next the sea. The most curious one is that called Llech, a square room about six feet and a half in extent, and ten feet in height. The shape of this cavern, to use the words of Dr. Ingleby, "is semi-octagonal, terminated in front by two square columns of freestone. The front and seats are in perfect preservation; but of the stone table which many years ago occupied the centre, the pedestal only remains. The font, or rather stone basin, is supplied by a spring of most delicious water, which, at certain seasons, flows in copious quantities into an artificial bath, excavated in the rock below. It is said that the cave was fitted up as a grotto, or pleasure-house, by some ancestors of the Mostyn family; and this is all that is known about it." Llech is best reached from the sea, but there is a zigzag pathway to it from the cliffs, which may be used if with care, and with a little improvement, such as an iron railing placed

on the sea margin of the path at precipitous places, this old footpath might be safely followed even by children. Near this is Ogo Hornby, or Hornby's cave, so called from a person of that name, the only one saved in a wreck, he being miraculously thrown safely out of the vessel upon a rock at this spot, the ship itself and all the other members of the crew having been lost. "He was hanging to the bowsprit when the vessel struck against the rocks, and was thrown off by the violence of the concussion on a projecting ledge, to which he clung until he found himself able to clamber up the acclivity—a task so difficult of accomplishment that the villagers to whom he applied for shelter would not credit his story, until the morning discovered to them the awful evidences of the ravages committed by the preceding night's storm." A good way further on, towards the east, under the Pen Trwyn rocks, is Ogo Golomenod, or the Pigeon's Cave, which is only accessible at low water. Between this last-named cave and St. Tudno's is a flat stony ledge,

which is covered about two feet in depth at high water, called *Maine y Stewardiad*, or the Steward's Bench, where, according to a filly tradition, the steward of the *Mostyn* family, if convicted of wronging any of the tenants, was compelled to sit naked during "the washing of two tides."

The views from the Little Orme's Head are, I think, although not so various, superior to those on its larger namesake. There is here seen the country and mountains which are hidden from *Llandudno* by this range of hills. At the base of this large rock are two caverns, frequently visited in boats from the town; one called *Ogof Cythreuliaid*, the devil's cave; the other, *Eglwys Wen*, or the White Church.

About a mile from the foot of the Little Orme, towards the shore on the other side, is the ancient farm-house of *Penrhyn*, mentioned by *Leland* in the time of *Henry the Eighth*,—"Place *Penrine*, an auncient stone house by est north est on the shore, longing to *Mr. Poel of Flintshire*," *Itinerary*, v. 50. The only portion of the mediæval buildings remain-

ing is a small chapel, now used for common farming purposes, and the windows so built up that its original character is hardly distinguishable. Penrhyn was formerly thought so important that it is placed in most of the early maps of North Wales, in which very few private residences were noted. In Speed's Maps, 1608, Penrhyn and Eglwys Rhos are the only places mentioned on this range of hills. The main portion of the present building was erected in 1590, that date, surmounted by the monogram I. H. C., being on the mantel-piece; to the left of which is a curious old semicircular open wooden cupboard of probably the same date, bearing a Welsh inscription. The house is somewhat modernized, and recent plastering conceals much of its ancient external character. A stone, let into the outer wall of an additional wing, is inscribed,—“W. P. 1635.” There are some curious traditions connected with this house, which were first, I believe, narrated in Williams' History of Aberconwy, 1835, p. 123, and are worth transcribing:—

Penrhyn was for several centuries the seat of the family of Pugh, the last of whom married the heiress of Coytmor, and having issue two daughters only, the name is now extinct. Robert Pugh of Penrhyn Creiddyn was sheriff of Caernarvonshire in 1561. This family was descended from Ednyved Vychan, and his arms are carved in stone on the house. At a short distance from it is the family chapel, now defecrated into a stable; it is about twenty-five feet long, by fifteen wide; the altar table of stone is recollected by several now living; by a grant of pope Nicholas, three-fourths of the tithe of Penrhyn were attached to this chapel, and the same is now vested in the estate. The family for a long period after the Reformation professed the Roman catholic religion, and they kept a priest, who officiated in this chapel for themselves, and a few catholic neighbours; in connection with this circumstance is the following anecdote, which is current in the neighbourhood: it is said that a plot was formed here to put to death all the Protestants in Creiddyn, and for the accomplishment of this deed a body of men was to arrive at a certain time of the night; previously to their coming, great preparations were made in preparing provisions, and a servant of Gloddaith, who paid his addressee to a woman in the service of the family, finding her engaged at an unseasonable hour, obtained by his urgent inquiries a knowledge of the conspiracy: he immediately hastened home, and disclosed what he had heard to his master, who with the greatest despatch procured a troop of horse, and invested Penrhyn. This speedy intervention frustrated their designs, and some of the inmates escaped, while others were taken; but the priest, who was supposed to be the contriver of

the plot, for some time eluded the strict search made for him : it happened, however, that some persons, being in a boat out at sea, observed smoke ascending from Rhiwleden rock (the Little Orme), which circumstance exciting their curiosity, they hastened there, and in a small cave called *Ty yn y graig*, which is about ninety feet from the summit, and the approach to which is extremely difficult, the priest was discovered ; he was drawn and quartered in a field below the house, and his name, Sir William Guy, is even preserved. There was a hole behind the house called *Twl arddau cant o wyr*, where it was supposed that the arms were concealed ; and after the departure of the Pughs to Coytmor, among other things left behind, was an old trunk, which the tenants and some of their neighbours opened, and found therein a withered hand, which is supposed to have been one of the members of this same priest.

As these traditionary accounts are generally interesting, I shall make no apology for inserting another, still more curious, relating to Penrhyn, the truth of which seems never to have been doubted by the neighbourhood. At the time of the following occurrence, the family at Penrhyn consisted of a son and two daughters ; the former, according to the practice of the age, went on his travels abroad ; but before he set out, he took the precaution of putting a needle between one of the joists and the ceiling in the little kitchen, and he also drove the tooth of a harrow into a pear-tree in the orchard. After a lapse of many years, and all hopes of his return being given over, he arrived a beggar, and coming home he found his parents dead, and his sisters in possession of his property. He stated who he was ; but the sisters insisted that he was an

impostor, asserting that they were certified of their brother's death: to prove his identity, he said that the needle would be found in a certain place, and as a further proof he named a particular tree into which he had driven the harrow tooth. The needle was found, and when they followed him to the orchard, he removed the bark which had grown over the iron, and showed it to the sisters; notwithstanding he was forcibly ejected from the premises, and it is said that he was flogged with a whip, in which large pins were fixed, as an additional punishment of his supposed imposture. He was received into a neighbouring cottage by the inhabitants, who had known him before he went abroad, and were satisfied of his identity; he remained here for some time; but having gone out one day, he was missed, and never returned. Although his fate was surmised, no clue could be obtained to what had become of him; and this mysterious event was constantly talked of by the country, and successively handed down from father to son; to this cause also the common people, fond of the marvellous, have assigned the decay of the family, as being under a curse, which had once been of the highest respectability; the estates have long been sold, and the family is now extinct. It is always difficult to arrive at the exact date of this sort of traditional tales; but as the great grandson of the person, who received the outcast into his house, is now living, this and some other circumstances will enable us to place this occurrence about a hundred and fifty years ago. To make the above account complete, I should observe that Mr. Hughes, the tenant at Penrhyn, not many years since, had occasion to build a lime-kiln, and in a fissure of the rock, filled with soil, he discovered a perfect skeleton, immediately behind the house.

Continuing our walk past Penrhyn, those who are interested in such matters may turn to the right after a quarter of a mile to visit a large tumulus, now partially levelled, which is situated a few yards to the left of the road in a field a quarter of a mile distant from the turning. Others may well neglect this, and pass on to the coast, where, after a shingly walk of a mile, we reach, close to the shore, the singular little building of Capel Saint Trillo. This interesting but mean-looking edifice measures internally eight feet by eleven feet and a half. The walls are five feet in height from the ground to the commencement of an arched roof, which is curiously formed of common boulders and rude pieces of slate placed endwise in mortar. This roof is upwards of two feet thick in the centre, tapering to a thickness of fifteen inches on the sides. The outer walls are massively constructed, being twenty-two inches in thickness, and the building is lighted by three small loop-holes. The entrance is twenty-seven inches wide, but the roof over it has given way, so that its

original character is not discoverable. Mr. Longueville Jones, an experienced antiquary, assigns this structure to the commencement of the sixteenth century. It covers a spring of water celebrated in the neighbourhood for its purity, and there seems to be little doubt but that it enshrined it as a holy well. In Pennant's time, the building was surrounded with a stone wall, few traces of which now remain. Amongst the *débris* there is a portion of the upper part of a regularly carved stone column, possibly a fragment belonging to the ancient entrance to the chapel.

A short walk hence to the old beacon-turreted church of Llandrillo yn Rhos, near which are the ivy-covered ruins of an old house, called Plas Bryneuryn, generally stated to be of remote antiquity. They are, however, not more ancient than the reign of Elizabeth. On a large hill to the south of this, Bryn Eurian, are the remains of a very extensive British fortification. According to the Rev. Robert Williams,—“On the summit of Bryn

Euryn, in this parish, was Llys Maelgwn Gwynedd, where he resided before he removed to Dyganwy. There still remain evidences of an early fortification here; on the south side the rock is cut precipitously, similarly to Dyganwy hill, and the remains of a rampart on the other side are discernible. Within the area there is a circle of thirteen yards in diameter, and three graves, fifteen yards long by seven wide." The extent and character of this fortified post are traceable by the visitor with great ease, the remains being far more perfect than those of Pen y Dinas.

There is but one shaded walk for the summer in the neighbourhood, but a beautiful walk it is,—that to Gloddaeth. Turn to the left on reaching the little church of Eglwys Rhos, and pass through the charming woods on the side of the hill called Bryn Maelgwyn. On the brow of the next hill is the ancient mansion of Gloddaeth, for many generations the seat of the Mostyn family. Part of the present building was erected in 1584. The heights

above are covered with fine plantations, the walks through which reveal a succession of charming views. On the summit of the hill are seen traces of a maze, which, it is said, is to be restored. It is alluded to in a notice of Gloddaeth which occurs in the sailor's diary of 1769, previously quoted,—“After dinner, we had an invitation to see Gloddaeth, an ancient feat belonging to Sir Roger Mostyn, Bart. Gloddaeth Hall is a large old building, situated upon the south side of a mountain, in the midst of a fine wood, with avenues cut through in many places, each of which is near half a mile in length, which affords a beautiful prospect in every way. These avenues, several of which lie one above another, form a kind of amphitheatre, the sight whereof is most delightful. And what adds still more to its beauty, is a level tract of land which lies above it, upon which grows a stately grove of a circular form, with avenues cut (or rather planted) round the centre in the form of a maze, or the walls of ancient Troy, so that if you enter it in a careless manner,

you may meander about a considerable time before you find the way out. From thence we were conducted to the very summit of the mountain, or rather rock, it being little else, called in Welsh, *Arerig* or *Carrig Carrig*; from which place you have a view of the sea as far as the eye can carry you, and in a clear day you may see the Isle of Man; the mountains in Cumberland we saw, besides eight or nine more different counties; in short, I spent the most pleasant afternoon imaginable. We had in company Mr. Griffith, a jovial fat steward, with four or five more jovial companions, two bottles of rum, sugar, a pitcher of water, pipes and tobacco, a fire upon the rock, and a slave of the steward's to attend us, and, had the Druids themselves been there, they certainly would have joined chorus. The evening approaching, we descended the rugged mount, went along with the steward to *Gloddaeth*, where we were to lodge, spent the evening like true sons of Bacchus, and there went to sleep as is necessary in such cases."

There are very pleasant strolls on the hills on the Llandudno side of Gloddaeth. Leaving the rock of Bryn Maelgwyn to the right, and passing to the high ground over the farm called Fferm, the pedestrian soon reaches Cadair-fy-nain, My-grandmother's-chair, a name given to a large square piece of rock, on one side of which, fronting Llandudno, is placed a flat-shaped stone, the latter being the seat, and the other forming a back to it. Cadair-fy-nain is really a comfortable seat for two persons belonging to the present degenerate races of the world; but even, in remote times, "my grandmother" must have been remarkable for width to have required a chair of this magnitude. Walk on, past an old mill, to a hill on the Conway side of the Little Orme's Head called Mynydd Pentre. About this spot, the stones, in their natural positions, are sometimes so fantastically placed, it is often difficult to state with certainty that any particular ones belong to British antiquities; but on the summit of this eminence are what appear to me to be remains

of a cromlech, one upright stone only remaining, the others having been dispersed and broken in the locality.

Eglwys Rhos is chiefly noted as the traditional spot of the death of Maelgwyn, who, in mythic history, is said to have succeeded to the sovereignty of Britain on the death of King Arthur in the sixth century. His name is not only preserved in that of the adjacent hill, but has been pressed into the service of the nomenclature of Llandudno, where we have already Plas Maelgwyn, Maelgwyn House, and Bryn Maelgwyn; a consolatory fact for all sinners and tyrants, showing that no amount of wickedness need deter its perpetrator from indulging in the hope of attaining an honourable posthumous reputation. This Maelgwyn is said, "when at Bangor, to have been struck with remorse for the crimes of his past life, and to have come to a resolution of retiring from the world, and devoting himself to a cloister; a design which he did not persist in, but returned to the affairs of government. He

died of the *vad velen*, or yellow plague, in the church of Llanrhos, whither he had taken himself for shelter. The British poets personified disease, and this, in the form of a woman, was to slay Maelgwn, if he looked upon it, which he incautiously did through the window. Taliesin's prophetic words are these :—

E ddaw pryv rhyvedd—O Vorva Rhianedd
 I ddial anwiredd—Ar Vaelgwn Gwynedd ;
 Ai vlew ai ddannedd—Ai lygaid yn euredde,
 A hyn a wna ddiwedd—Ar Vaelgwn Gwynedd.

“ A strange creature will come from the Marsh of Rhianedd, to punish the crimes of Maelgwn Gwynedd : its hair, its teeth, and its eyes are yellow, and this will destroy Maelgwn Gwynedd.”

This pestilence, which raged in the district between the Conway and Dyffryn Clwyd, is recorded in the following Triad :—“ Tair haint echrys Ynys Prydain : Cyntav, haint o gelanedd y Gwyddyl a laddwyd ym Manuba gwedi gormesu o honynt ugain mlynedd a naw a'r wlad Wynedd. Ail, haint y vad

velen o Ros, ac achos celaneddau lladdedigion y bu honno, ac od elai neb o vewn eu gwynt cwympo 'n varw yn ddioed a wnelai : a'r drydydd haint, y chwys drewllyd, achos llygru yr yd gan wlybanaeth yn amser Gormes y Normeinwyr, y gan Wiliam y Bastardd.—The three dreadful pestilences of the Isle of Britain. First, the pestilence from the carcases of the Gwyddelians, who were slain in Manuba, after they had oppressed the country of Gwynedd for twenty-nine years. Second, the pestilence of the yellow plague of Rhos, and which was caused by the carcases of the slain, and whoever went within reach of the effluvia fell dead immediately : and the third was the pestilence of the fetid sweat, in consequence of the corn having been injured by wet in the time of the oppression of the Normans by William the Bastard."—WILLIAMS' *History of Aberconwy*, pp. 6—9.

About a mile from Eglwys Rhos, near the banks of the estuary of the Conway, are two conspicuous hills, the site of the ancient castle of Diganwy, a

place distinguished in Welsh history. Its name breathes of poetry rather than of war,—*Dy gan wy*, the white waves breaking on the shore. According to the Welsh writers, the original castle was erected in the sixth century by Maelgwyn Gwynedd, the sovereign above mentioned; but there does not appear to be anything known with certainty of its history, before its destruction by Llewelyn the Great, after which it was rebuilt, in 1210, by Randal Blondewil, earl of Chester. The castle destroyed by Llewelyn is spoken of by Giraldus Cambrensis, in 1188, as a noble structure. Its possession was of great importance to the English, who retained it with difficulty, owing to its situation enabling the Welsh to cut off their supplies. King John encamped here in 1211, but Llewelyn took possession of the intervening country, and the former was reduced to such straits that he was compelled to retreat with his army, numbers of which died from starvation. A greater monarch, Henry the Third, fared no better in 1245, being compelled to retreat

from Diganwy ; a process which was again repeated in 1258 ; and four years later, in 1262, the castle was taken and demolished by Llewelyn. The few remains now visible are those of the castle then destroyed. In Leland's time there were "greate ruines," so that probably much has been since taken away for other buildings. The larger hill, that nearest the sea, had its sides cut, any crevices being filled up with masonry, so as to form a high precipice on all sides excepting on that fronting the other hill. The remains on this larger hill consist of those of a tower on the side opposite the Great Orme, of the walls surmounting the precipice, and of the keep, the latter being a rectangular excavation in the middle of the levelled top of the hill. This is now seen about twenty feet in depth, but much earth and rubbish has fallen in, and it was originally no doubt much deeper. The outer wall ran down the south side across the intervening space to the other hill, with forts midway between, where may still be observed massive fragments of wall four

feet and a half thick. There appears to have been a wall carried through the middle of the intervening space to the north side, a small portion of which, being no less than ten feet in width, still remains. On the inner hill there are no vestiges of fortification left, if we except some earthen trenches, and a large fragment of masonry, being the end of the principal southern wall between the two hills. It will thus be seen that, although the ruins of Diganwy are insignificant in extent, sufficient remains to show the great strength of the ancient castle, and to cast lustre on the prowess of its conqueror, the great Llewelyn.

According to a manuscript of the sixteenth century, "Tyganwy alias Gannocke Castell was an ancient Britishe fortification in the tyme of the Kinges of Brittain, for Maelgwn lyved there, and lyeth buried at Priestholme where hee dyed, havynge taken uppon hym the habitt of a monke, and all the Kinges after Maelgwn untill . . . lyved there, and after ytt continued to bee the seate of the

kinges of North Wales untill the Conquest, that the kinges of England began to invade North Wales, and sometymes to gayne that and other Castells in Rhos Rhynoniog and Tegengle. Once you may see ytt reedified in Kinge Johns tyme to the Kinges use by the earle of Chester, but the Castell was not originally buylte by any one of the earles of Chester." It is by no means impossible that there was a British fortification at Diganwy in ancient times, for in the seventeenth century there were found here a large number of the instruments generally called celts. According to an old unpublished letter, now before me, a number of moulds used for casting these instruments were also discovered.

Half a mile from Diganwy, on the summit of a small hill near Bryniau, are the remains of an ancient circular tower, twelve feet in diameter inside. Not much more than half of the walls of this tower now exist, forming a semicircular fragment of masonry, upwards of four feet thick, and about twenty feet in height. The mortar appears to be very ancient,

and it is usually considered by antiquaries to have been a Roman watch-tower. There are marks of floors which appear to me to partake of a more modern character, but it is a subject on which my opinion is worthless. The celebrated Roman pharos at Dover is certainly constructed in a very different manner.

Nearly opposite Diganwy, at the mouth of the estuary of the Conway, are the large muscle banks, which for so many generations have yielded an apparently inexhaustible supply of muscles for the pearl fishery, which is still carried on energetically. The best account of it that I have met with is that given by Mr. Williams,—“There are two kinds of muscles found in the Conwy, from which pearls are obtained; *mya margaritifera*, *cragen y diluw*, and the *mytilus edulis*, *cragen las*. Those of the former species are procured high up the river, above Treviw, and pearls scarcely inferior to the oriental ones are occasionally found in them. The pearl which Sir Richard Wynne of Gwydir, chamberlain to

Catherine, queen of Charles the Second, presented to her majesty, was of this kind, and it is said that it adorned the regal crown. These fine pearls are but seldom met with, although the shells are common, and the search of them does not afford regular employment. This shell is five inches and a half long, and two and a half broad. The other variety, the *cragen las*, is found in abundance on the bar at the mouth of the river, and great quantities of the muscles are daily gathered by numbers of industrious persons. At ebb tide, the fishers, men, women, and children, may be observed busily collecting the muscles, until they are driven away by the flood. They then carry the contents of their sacks and baskets to Cevnvro, the northern extremity of the marsh, where the muscles are boiled; for this operation there are large *crochanau*, or iron pots, placed in slight huts; or rather pits, as they are almost buried in a vast heap of shells. The fish are picked out, and put into a tub, and stamped with the feet until they are reduced to a pulp; when, water being

poured in, the animal matter floats, which is called *folach*, and is used as food for ducks, while the sand, particles of stone, and the pearls, settle in the bottom. After numerous washings the sediment is carefully collected and dried; and the pearls, even the most minute, are separated with a feather on a large wooden platter." The muscles are found in considerable abundance at low water all along the shore at the entrance of the river, and are dredged by boatmen along the course of the stream as well as collected on the muscle banks. I tried my fortune with about a hundred of them, a number which yielded nearly a dozen pearls, two or three of the size of a large pin's head, the others exceedingly minute.

We saw no specimens of the larger kind of muscles found higher up the river. There is a very curious notice of these latter in a letter written from Nant Francon in the year 1690,—“As for the pearls found in these mountainous rivers, they are very plentiful, and commonly large; though few of

them well coloured ; they are found in a large black muscle, peculiar to such rivers. Several ladies of this county and Denbigh-shire have collections of good pearle, found cheifly in the river Conwy. One M^r Wynne of Bodyskalhen (a gentleman in severall respects very curious and ingenious) hath a stool-pearle out of the river as big as the kernell of a field-berd, much of the colour of a common blew agat, but with two white circles : one at the basis (if I well remember) and the other about the midft of it. Common people call the muscels, wherein they are found, by a name signifying deluge-shells : as if nature had not intended shells for the rivers, but being left there at the universall flood they had bred there, and soe propagated their kinde ever since. They know whether a muscle have a pearle in it before they open it : for such as have it are allwayes contracted and somewhat distorted from their usuall shape."

Having picked out our Conway pearls, let us go and see if there are any pearls left at Conway.

Alas! these latter are of a dingy colour, albeit interesting even in their discolourment. The largest is the ancient castle, built in the latter part of the thirteenth century, the remains of which are very extensive, and form a picturesque object in many views in the neighbourhood. They are not so grand as those of Carnarvon, but they partake of a more antique-looking and artistic character, the crumbling towers and walls rising darkly out of flaty rocks that project into the river. Another conspicuous object in Conway is the large old Elizabethan mansion, Plas Mawr, erected in 1577; and an ancient stone building, called the College, has been assigned to the early period of Edward the First, but it clearly belongs to the sixteenth century. Opposite the Castle inn is a large old house with wooden framework and lathed and plastered interstices, probably belonging to the sixteenth century. Adjoining that inn is an old hostel, now modernized, but retaining traces of its antiquity, the King's Head, where rested in former times a large propor-

tion of the travellers between Chester and Holyhead. There is a still better example of an old inn, the Black Lion, a gabled house bearing the date of 1589. The Town Hall was erected in the reign of James the First, on a beam over the fireplace of which is the name of Alderman Hooke, 1613. This person, who died in 1637, is recorded in his epitaph at Conway church to have been the forty-first child of his father, and himself the father of twenty-seven children; a statement which, for the sake of Miss Martineau, we may hope is exaggerated. The possibility of such a calamity would be sufficient to make her frantic. The Conway historian naively calls it "an instance of extraordinary fecundity." I rather think it is.

Conway Castle is now a mere ruin. It was dismantled in 1665, but it had been in a dilapidated state long previously, even as far back as the reign of James the First. In a letter of that period it is stated that "the king's castle of Conway, in the county of Carnarvon, is in great ruin and decay,

whereof the greater part hath been downe and uninhabitable for manie ages past; the rest of the tymber supporting the roofe is all, or for the most parte, rotten, and growth daylie by wet more and more in decay, no man having dwelt in anie part thereof these thirty years passed; the leades are for a great part gone, the mayne wall being of a ragged, hard, and small stone, is of no value or worth; there is no land confessed to belonge thereto, without the wall thereof; within it is of a small compass, builded on a rocke, pile wyse, all which, at the intreatie of Mr. Huggen, we have thought good to certifie to your honor." The castle was granted to Lord Conway by Charles the First, and was wantonly dismantled by that nobleman, not by order of the Government, in the reign of Charles the Second.

When I first saw Conway, some years ago, it was all but a perfect specimen of a mediæval fortified town, which, from the outskirts, realized an illumination of the chronicles of Froissart more vividly perhaps than any other city in the world. The

very meanness of the town aided the deception, and a spectator could almost imagine himself transferred into a city of the middle ages. As the place has improved in material wealth, this bit of sentimentality is ruined. The walls are still there, but the effect of the whole is marred by the new buildings, especially by those outside the boundaries; while the screaming railway engine, darting forth from that detestable-looking tubular bridge through an ancient fortification, with which its accessories have been formed with ill success to assimilate, renders all incongruous. "Crabbed age and youth cannot live together." Railways don't get on at all with antiquities. Who would care for Stonehenge if it were placed in the court-yard of a railway station? The Conway folks do not look upon the matter at all in this light. They talk with pardonable elation of the progress of their city. It is very natural. They don't care much for mediæval towns, and they do care a great deal for the money they have put into their pockets.

At Conway there is, or was a few years since, a custom on Easter Sunday somewhat similar to the ancient Swearing at Highgate. It was ruled that no one under twenty years of age was to go to bed that night under pain of being put in the stocks. No mercy was shown to the transgressor, who was dragged out of bed, hurried to the place of correction, and only released upon his giving satisfactory replies to such questions as, whether he liked best the mistress or the maid, ale or butter-milk, an open gate or a stile, and such like.

At high water, the large basin of the Conway just above the town appears as a beautiful inland lake. The village of Llanfaintffraid, on the water edge of a wooded sloping hill, shows here to great advantage. It resembles, in situation and, at a distance, even in appearance, those picturesque towns which border so numerous many of the lakes of Switzerland. It is a pity that the stream should not be ever seen as it is at high tide. Were a break-water formed between the shore at Diganwy and

Conway Marsh, with sluices opened only at high water, the river might be made one of the most beautiful in Great Britain. With this contrivance, and its bed deepened, a more regular navigation could be obtained between this and Trefriw, without intrenching too far on vested interests, and ultimately to the advantage of all.

A short and pleasant walk from Conway in the direction of Penmaenmawr, between the two coach-roads, leads to the long serrated ridge called the Town Hill. Here are fine sea and land views, but the chief interest consists in the remains of what is supposed to have been a large fortified British town. It is certainly of great antiquity, being alluded to in a mediæval Welsh poem. There are the shattered walls of what is called the citadel, a large space formerly surrounded by thick walls of dry stones. There appear to have been several outworks, and the whole further strengthened by intrenchments, traces of which are distinctly visible. Numerous specimens of the remains of what are called circular

houses are scattered about the encampment, and the whole locality is well worth a visit from any who can take an interest in the most ancient antiquities of this country, those which belong to a people antecedent even to the Roman invasion. The ridges of these hills terminate with the huge limestone rock of Penmaen Bach, before reaching which is a small cwm, in a dreary situation, in which, however, a solitary cottage gives evidence of civilization at a spot one would imagine hardly suited for any more advanced than our celtic ancestors.

There is a pleasant walk from Conway to the desolate church of Llangelynin. Take the road which leads to Ro, turning to the right before reaching that village, and keep in a straight direction up the hills, along a shaded road, through plantations. In a bleak spot, after passing the woods, the church is reached. It is remote from habitations, and has long been disused. In the churchyard I noticed a slab of stone, evidently detached from its proper resting-place, on which was

inscribed,—“ Sidney, y^e Daughter of Lancelot Bulkley, 1684.” Shortly before the church is reached, to the right of the road, in the elevated part of a boggy field, are distinct traces of a large circular British house. There are several encampments in this locality. The one most noticeable is that called Craig-y-dinas, a short distance from the church on the Conway side. It is a large intrenched position, which must naturally have been very strong, owing to the original formation of the rocks. Some traces of the old dry stone fortifications may still be observed, but most of the loose stones have been taken away for farming purposes.

Ascending the hills above Llangelynin, we arrive at a ridge called Cefn Maen Namor, overlooking the shallow valley that descends towards the tops of the hills above the old village at Dwygyfylchi. Turn to the left over the high serrated ridge of Tal-y-fan, whence there are charming views, and then descend on the other side until you reach a rough cartway. Again turn to the left, and before

long there is seen the little village of Ro. This route cannot be taken quite with-drawing-room fashion. Parts of it are rough and boggy. Ro is a miserable little village prettily situated at the foot of the mountains, on the banks of Afon Ro, a shallow river passing over boulders. There are two small wooden foot-bridges over the stream, which have a picturesque look. There is small accommodation here in the refreshment way. The traveller may content himself with eggs and bacon at a little beer-shop, with perhaps a dish of trout.

Another day, and it requires a long one, start from Conway to Ro, and then walk over the mountains to the charming village of Aber. This is rather a long walk, and was undertaken by us in happy ignorance of its extent, the ordnance map having been left behind. We trudged and trudged along, thinking that Aber was only two or three miles distant from Ro; but having walked a considerable distance, a chance Welsh shepherd told us it was still about two or three miles off. Another

hour's walk, and another chance shepherd again to tell us that our destination was about two or three miles distant ; but this would have been the answer no matter what part of the road we had been in. The Welsh shepherds, as a rule, do not understand English, but they have picked up a few set phrases, with which they favour the tourist ; and this is one of them. To be sure, the Welsh miles may be longer than English ones. This is not unlikely. Taylor the Water-poet complained of their length more than two centuries ago. "Most of the Welsh miles," observes the pleasant old waterman, "are large London measure ; not any one of them but hath a hand-bredth or small cantle at each end ; by which means, what they want in broadness, they have it in length ; besides the ascending and descending almost impassable mountains, and the break-neck stony ways, doth make such travellers as myselfe judge that they were no misers in measuring their miles. Besides, the land is courser then it is in most parts about London, which makes them to

afford the larger measure; for course broad-cloath is not at the rate of velvet or fatten."

The road we are now traversing, that from Ro to Aber, was occasionally used by travellers to Ireland, in preference to going round by Conway and Penmaenmawr. "This is nearer by six or eight miles, but an exceedingly bad mountainous road, and which I would not advise the traveller to take."

—*Letters from Snowdon, 1770.* The first part of the walk from Ro, up a somewhat steep ascent, affords a variety of charming views of the vale of the Conway. After passing a farm-house called Buarth, about a mile from Ro, note on the right-hand side, a few yards from the road, in the line of a loose wall, a fine cromlech, consisting of four upright stones surmounted by a very large rude slab. This cromlech is not noticed in the ordnance map, nor by any tourist; but it may perhaps, notwithstanding a discrepancy as to the number of the supporting stones, be the same which is mentioned in a curious manuscript account of British antiqui-

ties, compiled in the year 1772,—“ In a hedge row, a bow-shot from the house (Buarth), stands Llech yr aſt, in length five cubits, in breadth four and a half, ſupported by five pillars, two taller than the reſt, which gives it an inclination to the north.” The haſty note I made of the cromlech does not enable me to verify the correctness of this deſcription ; nor, when I ſaw it, did I know of the manuſcript account. A century ago this locality was literally ſtudded with remains of primeval antiquities, but moſt of them have now been deſtroyed. About two miles and a half further on is the paſs of Bwlch y Ddwyfaen, formerly diſtinguiſhed by two large ſtone pillars fixed upright in the ground at about a hundred yards’ diſtance from each other. Only one of them, that to the left of the road, is now ſtanding. It is a block of ſtone, about ten feet high, quadrilateral at bottom and tapering to a point at top. It has the appearance of having been originally a huge boulder, partially and rudely cut on the ſides, and then placed upright in the ground.

The other stone, a little further on to the right of



the road, has fallen down, and has evidently been partially cut by rude workmen. These stones once probably belonged to a large circle. Near them, to the left, is a mutilated cairn of loose stones. All these stones, according to local tradi-

tion, came there in somewhat an odd manner. A giant and his wife, many centuries ago, were travelling along this route to Anglesea. At this spot, they met a rustic of whom they enquired the distance. The poor fellow shook his head, and lifting up his feet, protected only by the remnants of what were evidently once thick wooden clogs, informed his astonished hearers that these were quite new when he quitted the island, and that he had walked direct from it ever since. The giant's wife was so dis-

couraged by this that she gave the whole matter up as a bad job, and in her despair let fall the contents of her apron, these identical stones. If these roads in ancient times were anything like what they now are, we can readily believe in the state of the rustic's clogs. They are quite rough enough to wear out soles of any thickness, whether of leather or of wood. Ours were in a rare state by the time we got to the station at Aber, between five and six miles further on. The descent into Aber, from the brow of the hill, Foel Aduarth, is very pleasing; the more so from the contrast it affords to the wild and desolate waste that has been traversed from Bwlch y Ddwyfaen.

Porthlwyd is a favourite spot for an excursion from Conway. The bridge over the stream at the bottom of the falls is about seven miles on the Llanrwst road. Shortly before reaching this, note in the hedge of a field a few yards from the road, on the left-hand side, a small cromlech. The road here passes under a fine ridge of hills, fringed with

woods in the midst of which ever and anon are jutting rocks. The cataract of Porthlwyd, called Rhaiadr Mawr, is, in a flood, an extremely fine one; but in dry weather it is generally seen to great disadvantage. A good account of it, far better than I could give, is found in Bingley,—“ Ascending a winding path the tourist will, after about a quarter of an hour’s walk, arrive at the bed of the river, near the station from whence the fall is to be seen to the greatest advantage. The scene is highly picturesque. From the upper part two streams descend at some distance from each other. The range of rock down which the water is thrown is very wide and extremely rude, being formed, in horizontal ledges, into deep clefts and enormous chasms. The streams unite a little above the middle of the fall; they rush from thence in foam over the rocks, and, from the deep shelvings, in many places the water is entirely hidden from below. In addition to this, nearly every different stratum of rock throws it into a fresh direction. In the whole

scene there is the utmost irregularity. On the right of the cataract the inclosing rocks are nearly perpendicular, very lofty, and crowned with pendant foliage. Those on the left are very high and towering, adorned on the lodgements with grafs and ferns."

The spot here described is now, owing to the ground being enclosed, reached with some difficulty. The guides take visitors to a place over the falls, where the water rushes over a wide space interspersed with romantically disposed rocks, a sort of cascade plateau, a charming situation for a picnic; a corner too that reveals some of the finest views that can be obtained of the valley of the Conway. Above this spot, for some distance, the river is seen as a torrent forming a succession of small cascades. It flows from Llyn Eigiau, a small lake about three quarters of a mile wide. In Speed's maps, 1608, it is written Llynnga. Leland has it, Linne Yge.

At the distance of a mile from Porthlwyd are the falls of Dolgarrog, which are formed by the descent of the waters of Llyn Cwlyd, a lake, upwards of a

mile and a half in length, situated in the mountains to the North of Capel Curig. These falls are difficult to describe. The water dashes along, foaming in every direction through channels hidden by shrubs and trees growing on the ledges of the rocks, so that neither pen nor pencil can give an adequate idea of the romantic character of the scene, which at best can only be studied in detached portions. This cataract will not be appreciated if only seen, as most persons are content to see it, from the carriage road. The summit of it must be attained before a judgment be formed. There will be seen deep falls of water, rushing, by the sides of mighty boulders and large fragments of fallen rocks, into the numerous hidden channels previously alluded to.

Our excursions did not now extend in this direction beyond the falls of Dolgarrog; nor am I sure, although duly appreciating the beauties of the well-known route past these through Llanrwt and Betwys-y-Coed, not forgetting that most charming of all river crossings, the Pont-y-Pair, that it would be

at all easy to do more than repeat what is found in other works. There is the mineral spring near Trefriw, from which runs about the nastiest iron chalybeate I ever had the folly to taste. Then is passed the beautifully situated, though I fancy the somewhat overrated, town of Llanrwst, now rapidly rising in importance, and perhaps destined, when the railway to Conway is completed, to become a large city. Should such be the case, the following extract from a sailor's diary, penned in 1769, and giving an account of its appearance at that period, may some day be perused with interest,—“About six o'clock the same evening, we came to an anchor at the Spread Eagle in a very shattered condition. Llanrwst is situated in a very deep bottom upon the river Conway, betwixt Denbigh hills and Carnarvon rocks, some of which appear to hang over the town. Nevertheless we found much better anchorage than could have been expected at such a bottom. Llanrwst is a small market town, containing one church, a market hall, as they call it, and about fifty or

sixty houses, or rather huts, but never a good house amongst the whole lot. The houses and the inhabitants are much the same, viz., both of the rustick order. The houses consist chiefly of one story, which makes them so lofty that I observed more smoke come out of the doors of most of them than out at the chimneys, but I rather think several modern built houses which we saw had no chimneys at all. The inhabitants, who are natives, seem to be real descendants of the ancient Druids, both in shape and dress. Numbers of both sexes which we saw, I am pretty sure, never wore a shoe or stocking since they were created. After we had refreshed ourselves, taken our beer on board, and fresh sheathed our commodore, we went to sleep and slept very well till morning."

Llanbedr, on the hills above the Llanrwst road about six miles from Conway, is well worth a visit, were it only for the opportunity of seeing one of the most remarkable ancient primitive fortifications preserved in this country. It is called Pen Caer

Helen, and is situated on the summit of a hill about a mile from the village. Pennant is, I believe, the only writer who has described this remain from original observation. He notices it as "a British post of great strength, and in some parts singularly guarded. It had the usual fosses, and vast ramparts of stones, with some remains of the facing of walls, and the foundations of three or four round buildings." Notwithstanding that many of the stones of this fortification have been taken away for use in modern division walls and sheep-pens, the remains are still very extensive, and show clearly the extent of the ancient huge dry-stone ramparts. But the chief peculiarity of this fortified post consists in the curious fact that, near the outer walls, on the western side, are two large spaces of ground thickly set with small sharp-pointed stones, placed upright in the ground; a peculiarity which I cannot find is noticed in regard to any other similar work, and which seems to defy the probability of our discovering a plausible explanation.

From this spot the views are extensive, reaching on one side over the vale of Conway and the Denbighshire hills, and on another over a sterile waste up to Carnedd Llewelyn. We descended hence, over rather boggy ground, to the pretty little river, Afon Dulyn, three quarters of a mile distant ; the stream here charmingly meandering between wooded banks, in some spots the waters rushing over numberless boulders fantastically distributed. There is a beautiful walk by the side of this stream, through shrubbed paths, into the Conway road. The stream rises in Llyn Dulyn, below Carnedd Llewelyn, a lake which is mentioned by Leland as the Black Pool, and as being "full of stones," alluding to the strange masses of rock with which it is surrounded. We did not reach this pool, but as it is mentioned by many early writers, and is not described in the ordinary guide-books, I am induced to extract the following account of a walk to it from Llanbedr, which is given by an anonymous tourist of 1837,—
"From Pen Caer Helen we proceeded to Pen-y-

Gadair, which is nearly of the same elevation as the preceding, and which presents the same prospect, but varied in its aspect. Descending from this, we pursued our route towards Llyn Dulyn. On our way we passed several immense detached stones, one of which, called Carreg Saefon, or the Saxon Stone, must have been at least sixty or seventy tons in weight. I noticed one very large stone, which from its position and appearance struck me as designed for a rocking-stone. A trial proved my conjecture to be correct, as the guide and myself were enabled to move it with very little exertion. At length, after a walk which was by no means laborious, we reached Llyn Dulyn, or the Black Lake. Its appearance very strikingly corresponds with its name. It is situated a little below Carnedd Llewelyn, and is approached by descending a precipitous rock, or rather large masses of shapeless and disjointed stones, the undoubted result of a volcanic eruption at some former period. It is surrounded by huge masses of a very peculiar stone, the geological designation of

which I am not acquainted with, but which eminent geologists, who have examined it, assert is only to be found in the vicinity of volcanos. In addition to this, calcined masses of stone are to be found scattered over a circuit of the country for seven miles round. Again, the very appearance of the rocks around the lake testify to some great convulsion, which has shattered them into ten thousand ruinous fragments. The lake itself has a very gloomy appearance, the colour being almost black, though the water which flows from it is perfectly clear. Several attempts have been made to sound its depth, but without success, as a line of ninety-six fathoms found no bottom. Some say that a much greater length of line than even this has been tried, with the same result. It abounds with excellent fish, as indeed do all the streams which issue both from this and the other lakes in this neighbourhood.

“ Leaving this we proceeded to ascend to Llyn-Henllyn and Ffynnon y Llyffant, two other lakes between Llyn Dulyn and Carnedd Llewelyn. The

former of these abounds in fish of a very large size. The latter is situated immediately below the peak of the mountain. In a short time we attained to the summit of Carnedd Llewelyn. On our ascent we encountered some difficulty in consequence of the violence of the gale which swept over this towering elevation. The cold was intense; I should suppose it to be five or six degrees below the freezing point, and this while the sun was shining at noon day, and the temperature in the valley was sixty-two degrees of Fahrenheit. The snow lay very deep in some situations. We walked over a ravine which my guide informed me was at least forty feet in depth. In this, and similar places, he said that it would not disappear until the close of August." This mountain is only about a hundred feet lower than Snowdon, and there does not seem to be any reason why the ascent to it, in the direction here described, should not become a favourite excursion from Conway or Llandudno.

Johnson, the naturalist, visited this mountain in

1639, and his account is probably the first recorded one of an ascent of it. He took altogether a different route to that above described, starting from the village of Llanllechid on the other side; and was much annoyed because his rustic guide would not be persuaded to take him "to the steep parts where the rare plants only grow." The guide was also afraid of the eagles, and told our naturalist that they started from their nests after their prey with such force that it was unsafe to venture to the highest crags. According to local tradition, a giant named Rhitta, the terror of the surrounding country, clothed in a garment woven from the beards of the enemies he had slain, was formerly the sole inhabitant of Carnedd Llewelyn.

Dwygyfylchi is within an easy distance of Conway or Llandudno. There is a pleasant walk to it by the inland or old coach road which led from Conway to Penmaenmawr, and at about three miles from the former we reach the pass of Sychnant, or the dry hollow, an appropriate name for a romantic

division between lofty rocks on one side and a steep incline of loose limestone on the other. The ancient road was at the bottom of the pass. The present one winds up the hill on the south side, near the top of which, and under a rock slightly projecting over the road, is one of the most remarkable single echoes I ever heard, unequalled, in my small experience, excepting perhaps by one that the drivers pause at on the St. Gothard road in Switzerland. If you express a hope that it is quite well, the echo replies "quite well" so clearly and distinctly, that you feel hurt at its want of politeness in not adding the fully anticipated "I thank you." At the bottom of the pass is reached the old rustic village of Dwygyfylchi, built on the side of a little mountain stream which Leland calls Avon Duegeuelth, but which now is known as Nant Dacar Llwynog. This stream, which abounds with small trout, should be followed on the right hand side through a long glen, wooded at the further end, where it falls over the upper rock, forming a small but romantic cascade.

If the brook is passed before the wood is reached, turning to the left up the hills, we reach the upper range over the mountains, and in an elevated vale observe the celebrated Maen y Campiau, a large upright stone, the Pillar of Games, supposed to be a relic of a British circus for the exhibition of ancient sports. It is more likely to be the remaining stone of a sepulchral circle. On the summit of a hill to the left are the remains of an immense cromlech, Maen-nanmor, the upper slab of which has fallen in huge broken pieces between the enormous blocks upon which it once rested. This cromlech appears to have been raised in the centre of two very large circles of upright stones, faint traces of which may still be observed.

The vale of Dwygyfylchi is enclosed by mountains on all sides except towards the north, where it is bounded for two miles by the sea. At the eastern extremity is Penmaen Bach, the Little Penmaen, a large limestone rock, and on the other side is the mountain of Penmaenmawr, the last of the

Snowdonian range, which, although only 1545 feet in height, is, from its peculiar position, jutting boldly into the sea, one of the most conspicuous mountains in Wales. It is oftener alluded to by early writers than any of the rest. It consists of a huge promontory of limestone rock, on a kind of table-land, on the top of which, at some distance from the edge of the cliff, rises a pyramidical hill, the latter covered with the *débris* of extensive ancient fortifications. Travellers from Chester to Holyhead, in former times, passed under the rock on the sands at low water, but when the tide was up, they were compelled to traverse an unprotected path high up on the side of the cliff, a road that involved dangers not only from the precipitous character of the rocks on the sea boundary, but from overhanging cliffs that were ever and anon dislodged by storms or frosts.

The earliest description of Penmaenmawr that I have met with occurs in Camden's *Britannia*, 1586, p. 388, in a passage thus fairly translated by

Holland,—“The shore, raising itself with a bending ascent, runneth on by Penmaen-maur, that is, the great stony head, a very exceeding high and steepe rock, which, hanging over the sea when it is floud, affourdeth a very narrow pathway for passengers, having on the one side huge stones over their heads, as if they were ready to fall upon them; on the other side the raging ocean lying of a wonderful steepe depth under it.” The story goes that this pathway was first formed by St. Seiriol, after the inundation which is said to have swept over the flat land that is supposed to have anciently connected Prieftholme with this coast. There is a curious account of this in a manuscript of the early part of the seventeenth century written by Sir John Gwynn of Gwedir, in the following terms,—“Sythence this greate and lamentable innundacion, the waye and passage beyng stopped in this straight in regard the sea was come in, and did beate uppon the rockes att Penmen Mawre, this holy man Seirial, lieke a good heremite, did cause a way to bee beaten and

cutte through the mayne rocke, which is the onely passage that is to passe that straight. This way leadeth from Dwygyfylchi to Llanvair Vechan, and is the kinges high way from Conewey to Bewmares, Bangor and Carnarvon, and the onely passage that the kynges poste hath to ryde to and from Ireland. This rocke is a myle and a haulf in hight and very pendicular, especially beneath this way; the way begynninge att the sea-shore within the parishe of Dwygyfylchi is cutt through the syde of a rocke still ascendynge untill you come to a cricke uppon the rocke called Clippyn Seiriall, and thence is cutt directly forward through the syde of a steepe hard rocke neither descendyng nor ascendynge untill you come to Seirialls Chappell, beyng aboutes a quarter of a myle from Clippyn Seiriall, and all that way is two hundred yardes above the sea, over which yf either man or beaste shoulde fall, both sea and rocke, rocke and sea, woulde strive and contend whether of both shoulde doe hym the greatest mischief; and from the Chappell aforesayd forward the way is

cutt through the syde of a gravely, rocky hill, still descendynge untill you come agayne to the seashore within the parishe of Llanvair; this way in leangth is aboute a myle and somewhat better, and in breadth two yardes, but in some places scarce a yard and a quarter, or a yarde. And this way is ever sythence kepte and repayred by a heremyte, who hath nothinge for his labour and service therein but the charity of well disposed people and passengers, and a gatheringe once every yeere in the parishes and towne churches adjoyninge, and the benevolence of the Justices of Peace, and such as bee ympanelled of the graund enquests in every sessions within the three shires of Northwales, and for all this the way woulde soone perishe, weare ytt not for the fyrmenes of the rocke, by reason of greate stones and rubbell that often fall from the hill, beyng dissolved uppon the thawynge of every greate snowe and froste, and sometymes either choake and fill upp the passage or ells breake downe greate gappes in the way, which are repayred by the said

heremyte with the healpe of thinhabitanter of the parishes adjoyninge, and newe foundations wrought in such gappes uppon poles and thornes." Pen-nant mentions having seen the ruins of this chapel, or, as it is here called, his Gweli, or bed; and they are said to be still discernible on the steep front of the mountain next the sea. The tradition goes that St. Seiriol had a church at Priestholme, from which island he had a raised pathway made to Penmaenmawr, "which pavement," observes an old writer, "may at this day be discerned when the sea is clear, if a man list to go in a boat to see it." A hill near the village of Penmaenmawr is still called Trwyn-yr-wylfa, the point of the doleful hill, a spot which tradition says was that on which the inhabitants of the low ground stood tearfully, whilst beholding the sad effects of the inundation.

In Camden's time, and for long afterwards, the passage by the side of Penmaenmawr was by a mere bridle-path, no doubt one of more peril than can well be imagined by any one acquainted with the

mountain in its present state. Sir John Brampton, in his Autobiography, thus describes a journey over it in the year 1631, taken in company with a lady, —“As wee rode, her feet hunge, as it were, over the rocke into the sea, and by degrees wee came soe high that shee was not able to sitt any longer, she was so affrighted; and the way was so narrow that she was taken backward from off the horse from behind, and soe she walked, as we all did, over the hill, the rock beinge extreame high, both from our feete to the sea and above our heads too, so that we rode and walkt as in the middle of the rock.”

Johnson, the naturalist, who passed over it in 1639, speaks of its dangers in a similar manner; and so do most of the early travellers who allude to it. It must be recollected that many of the passengers from London to Dublin, as at present, passed this spot; the reason of its being so notorious. Shirley, in his Saint Patrick for Ireland, 1640, speaks of “the root of Penmaenmawr” as the type of depth; Gayton, in 1654, compares it with

Teneriffe; and Taylor, the water-poet, refers to it thus in hobbling rhyme,—

The next day, when the clock strok two and foure,
I mounted Dun,—Dun mounted Penmen Mawre;
And if I do not take my aime amisse,
That lofty mountain seems the skies to kisse.

It is probable that soon after the Restoration of Charles the Second the path was widened. At all events a scheme about that time was approved of by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the design of which was to form a new carriage road, to be “in the narrowest place four feet wide,” over Penmaenmawr, “at present too well known for its deep and dangerous passage.”

It appears from some letters of the Earl of Clarendon, addressed to the Earl of Rochester in 1685, that at that period it was usual for carriages to pass on the sands of the shore under the mountain, the passengers in them waiting for low water, only foot and horse travellers taking the road. Lord Clarendon arrived at Penmaenmawr on De-

cember the 30th, 1685, but was compelled to return to Conway on account of the state of the tides leaving no space on the sands for his carriage. The next day, instead of attempting to pass with this encumbrance, he went over on foot, his lady accompanying him in a litter, and the rest of the suite on horseback. The noble writer then relates the astonishment created by the feat performed by two country people, who managed to drag his carriage over Penmaenmawr, and on to Beaumaris. The whole account presents so striking a contrast to the state of things at this day, it may not be amiss to give the earl's own words, as they appear in a letter written from Beaumaris on New-year's-day, 1686,—
“ We left Conway yesterday at six in the morning, and pursued the methods for our journey which I mentioned in my last from thence ; my wife in a litter, and the rest of us on horseback,—though I confess, for my own particular, I went on foot,—passed over Penmaen Mawr, at the foot of which, on this side, I met my Lord Bulkeley's coach and

servants, but they told us they had escaped very narrowly being cast away in coming over the ferry, and that the winds were so very high that it was not fit for us to attempt going that way ; so the coach carried us to Bangor, where we ferried over into Anglesey, and then put my wife into the litter again ; for never was or can come a coach into that part of the country ; and thus we came safe hither about three in the afternoon, God be praised, without any mischance to any of our company ; and here we are lodged at my Lord Bulkeley's, who makes very much of us, and entertains us most nobly. I left Sir Paul Rycaut at Conway, who had a mind to see what success I had in passing the mountains before he would venture, but I expect him here this day ; he offered two guineas to have his chariot carried over Penman ; and the Dean of Bangor, who met me on the borders of Wales, and will see me on board, offered him to have it done for ten shillings. He brought two honest fellows to me at Conway, who undertook to carry my

coach over Penman for twenty shillings ; they proposed to take it off the carriage, and so to carry it by strength of hands, and the carriage afterwards. This seemed feasible and likely to be accomplished, and I thereupon agreed to it ; but, to the amazement of all the company, last night at supper your officer, William, who is a very diligent fellow, came into us, and told us the coach was come, and that without taking it to pieces ; but by setting the horses in trace, one behind another, and keeping three or four men behind, that it might not slip back, they had drawn it over the hill upon the carriage and wheels. This would scarce have been believed, considering it is a great heavy coach, had not the coach been at the same time in my Lord Bulkeley's yard ; so that, God be thanked, we have now overcome all the difficulties of our land journey without the least ill accident ; and we are now ready to go to Holyhead, and to embark, as soon as the wind is fair, but it is now full in our teeth." The waggon was afterwards "brought over Penman

Mawr, with all its lading ; so that it is said here I have introduced a new way of travelling."

Some years after this, it would appear that protection had been placed on the side of the path nearer the sea, at least on some portion of it. De Foe, in his *Tour* printed in 1725, distinctly asserts that a wall had then been built all the way on the edge of the precipice. Nevertheless, in Boydell's large view of Penmaenmawr, published in 1750, the portion of the carriage road there represented is without any protective wall, and we see a coach partially thrown over the edge of the rock, narrowly escaping destruction. The overhanging rocks are well represented in this engraving. "Frightful enough," observes a tourist of 1748, "to see some of the chips of those old blocks cut off by the hand of time, hanging in the midway of their downward course to the sea." Lord Lyttelton, in 1756, mentions the road as then protected by a wall. It was, however, usual even at this date to pass by the sands at low water in preference to going over the road.

A guide-book of the same year, 1756, recommends the traveller to “keep the right hand way over a skirt of Pen-maen-bycan, or the lesser Stony-head; come upon the sands, and so continue; but if the tide is in, ascend a skirt of Pen-maen-maur, that is, the great Stony-head, a path difficult and dangerous, the ascent rough and steep, with a perpendicular precipice on the right to the sea, and an over-hanging rock on the left towards the land.”

A more complete account of its state in the middle of the last century, and one apparently to be relied upon as reconciling some of the discrepancies above alluded to, is given in a Description of England and Wales, published in the year 1769,—“The most remarkable mountain next to Snowdon is Penman-mawr, the most northerly of this chain, which, on the side next the sea, rises almost perpendicular to so great a height, that few spectators would be able to look down the dreadful steep without terror. On that side a road about seven feet wide is cut out of the rock; winding up the steep

ascent hill, it rises about two hundred and forty feet above the level of the sea ; and is nearly the same distance from the top of the rock, which at a great height hangs over the head of the passenger. On the side of this road next the precipice, the traveller was, till lately, only defended by a slight wall, in few places above a yard high, and in others by only a bank, that scarce rose a foot above the road ; while the sea, of which he has an unbounded prospect, is seen dashing its waves below. But it is said that a few years ago a wall was built, breast high, to the building of which the city of Dublin greatly contributed." This wall is noticed by Pownall, who visited Penmaenmawr the same year, 1769, and who observes that the " pass would be really terrible, were there not this parapet."

In the year 1772, a new road below the old one was commenced, after which the chief dangers of the passage were avoided. Dr. Johnson, when at Conway in 1774, was afraid of passing over Penmaenmawr after dusk, but he had not then heard of the

improvements,—“ Our coach was at last brought, and we set out with some anxiety, but we came to Penmaen Mawr by daylight ; and found a way, lately made, very easy, and very safe. It was cut smooth, and enclosed between parallel walls ; the outer of which secures the passenger from the precipice, which is deep and dreadful. This wall is here and there broken, by mischievous wantonness. The inner wall preserves the road from the loose stones, which the shattered steep above it would pour down. That side of the mountain seems to have a surface of loose stones, which every accident may crumble. The old road was higher, and must have been very formidable. The sea beats at the bottom of the way.”

Travellers long after this, however, insisted on perpetuating a strong idea of the dangers of this road. Thus Wigstead, in 1797, observes that “ the surface of the mountain, which is very steep, is covered with tremendous masses of stone, which seem ready to slide from their slippery base, and

overwhelm the passenger in inevitable destruction. From the almost incessant rain we had experienced for some time before, and the rapidity of the land-springs, which poured down on every side from the very summit, we were very much alarmed in our passage, lest one of these masses should arrest us; particularly as the wall had been driven in several parts down the precipice into the sea by similar accident; and, indeed, one huge fragment lay in the middle of the road, to all appearance very recently removed from above, and which I am certain, if broken up, could not have been cleared away by ten large waggons." The road was again improved, or rather reconstructed, by Telford in 1827; since which period no one has had the temerity to speak of the dangers of the journey. The face of the rock is now undergoing great alterations from the quarries that are in constant work. Boydell's engraving of 1750, and Pownall's of 1769, are probably the only memorials that will now convey a faithful idea of its original character.

The first one is also curious as showing that at that time the valley of Penmaenmawr was uninhabited. The other represents a portion of the country on the Llanfair Fechan side, the latter showing only fields and trees.

From the table surface of the large rock of Penmaenmawr rises, at a very short distance from the ledge overhanging the sea, a conical hill, called Dinas Penmaen, which is covered with the ruins of what was once the largest fortified position in North Wales. The earliest and most curious notice of this fortification that has been preserved occurs in the manuscript written by Sir John Wynn of Gwedir in the reign of Charles the First, in the following terms,—“ On the toppe of Penmen Mawr standes a high stronge rocky hill called Braych y Dinas, wher-uppon is to bee seene the ruynous walles of a stronge and invincible fortifficacion compassed with a treble walle, and within every walle there are to bee seene the ffoundacion of att leaste a hundreth towres all round and of æquall bignes, in breadth some fixe

yardes every way within the walles. The walles of this fame Dinas weare in moſte places two yardes thicke, and in ſome places aboutes three yardes thicke. This caſtle, when ytt ſtood, was ympregnable, and noe way to offer any aſſaulte unto ytt, the hill beyng high, rocky, and perpendicular, and the wales very ſtrong. The way or entrance unto ytt is aſcendynge with many turnynges, ſometymes one way, ſometymes an other way, ſoe that a hundredreth men might defend themſelves in this caſtle agaynſt a whole legion that ſhould aſſaile them, and yett ytt ſhould ſeeme that there weare lodgynges within theſe walles for twenty thouſand men. In the higheſt toppe of the rocke, within the innermoſt wall of this Dinas, there is a fyne delicate well wherin there is plentye of ſweate wholeſome ſpringe water att all tymes and in the drieſt ſummer, which is a wonderfull guyfte of God, that for the uſe of man water ſhould ſpringe uppe in the very uppermoſt toppe of ſoe highe and ſo hard a rocke, beyng att leaſte a myle and a hault or a myle and a quar-

ter in hight from the foote of Penmen Mawre. By tradicion wee doe receave ytt from our forefathers that this was the ultimum refugium, the strongest, surest, and safest refuge and place of defence that the auncient Brittaines hadd in all Snowden to defende themselves from the incurfions and inrodes of there enemyes, for the lieke place soe stronge, soe ympregnable, soe deffensive, is not to bee found in all Snowden ; and besydes, the greatenes and lardgenes of the worke sheweth that ytt was a princlye and royall fortificacion, strengthened both by nature and workmanshippe, seated in the toppe of one of the highest mountaynes in Snowden neare the sea, and in the myddeest of the best and fertilest soyle in all Carnarvonshire. The mountteynes adjoyninge to this place is fyne delicate dry pasture, and hath beene aunciently inclosed and inhabited, as appereth by the foundations of stone wales which are every where to bee discerned, and by ridges which are in very many places soe apparant as yf itt hadd beene plowed within this fixe yeeres ; but nowe ytt lyeth

waste, and is occupied in common by the inhabitants of the parishes adjoyninge, wheruppon they have pasture for all maner of beastes fans number, and have greate store of very good turffe and gorse for there fyinge.”

This curious description was to a great extent verified by Pennant about a century ago, although much of the fortification had become ruinous in the interval. “After climbing,” he says, “for some space among the loose stones, the fronts of three, if not four, walls presented themselves very distinctly one above the other. In most places the facings appeared very perfect; but all of dry work. I measured the height of one wall, which was at the time nine feet; the thickness seven feet and a half. Between these walls, in all parts, were innumerable small buildings, mostly circular, and regularly faced within and without, but not disposed in any certain order. These had been much higher, as is evident from the fall of stones, which lie scattered at their bottoms; and probably had once the form of towers,

as Sir John asserts. Their diameter in general is from twelve to eighteen feet; but some were far less, not exceeding five feet. The walls were in certain places intersected with others equally strong. On the north-west and south-east sides are the plain marks of two roads, of a zigzag form, with the remains of walls on both sides, which lead to the summit. On the small area of the top had been a group of towers, or cells, like the former; one in the centre, and five other surrounding it. Three are still distinct; of the two others are only faint vestiges. Near this had been, I believe, a similar group; but at present reduced to a shapeless heap of stones." Sir John Wynn certainly erred in describing the towers as being all of the same size, and there is also of course an exaggeration in the statement that there were "lodgings within these walls for twenty thousand men." It is difficult to imagine that towers five feet in diameter could ever have been intended for lodgings at all.

The hill now presents to the eye a rude mass of

loose stones, and it is not without close examination that the circuits of the ancient thick stone walls are at all traceable. The best account of it, in its present state, is that given by Mr. Longueville Jones. "We found," he observes, "the circuits of stone walls still perfect in some parts, but greatly dilapidated in others. They are about twelve to fifteen feet high, and about twelve feet thick; of loose stones, not fitting into each other with any attempt at masonry, but merely the shattered *débris* of that rough mountain piled together by human art. There is no appearance of mortar, nor of vitrification. Between the walls, and inside the central inclosure, but especially on the north eastern side of the summit, are a vast number of small circular cells, or *cyttiau*, which no doubt served for the habitations of the persons occupying this fortified post, and similar to those so common on the Caernarvonshire hills. Some of them were singularly perfect, and one, near the present north western entrance to the fortress, is still covered with its roof, but we could



THE ANCIENT CIRCLE, MEINIAU HIRION.

not penetrate within, and we did not feel ourselves justified in attempting to remove the stones. A tradition prevails that one of the Welsh armies took refuge here while Edward I. was invading this part of Wales. The likelihood of the account may be doubted, inasmuch as an army might be immediately starved out in so barren a position ; but, that it must have been a strong place of refuge in earlier times, there can be no doubt." There were, I think, intrenchments carried round the lowest outer wall. The well which is spoken of by Sir John Wynn is only a receptacle cut in the rock to receive the rain water, which, flavoured with weeds, is not always very agreeable to the taste.

About a mile and a half from Dinas Penmaen, near a rough cart road leading from Llanfair Fechan to the old village at Dwygyfylchi, is what is popularly called a Druidical circle, one of the most celebrated in North Wales. It is known as Meiniau Hirion, and consists of a circle of ten upright stones, smaller ones being placed between

the greater, completing the circle. It is now generally believed that these remains are sepulchral, the stones having been arranged to define and support the circle of the mound which was raised over the graves. In the present instance, there was also a wall originally surrounding the circle of stones. This curious fact appears from the following account written by Sir John Wynn early in the seventeenth century,—“Aboutes a myle from this fortification standeth the rarest monument that is to bee found in all Snowden, called, y Meini Hirion ; ytt standes within the parishe of Dwygyfylchi above Gwddw-glas, uppon the playne mownteyne. This monumente standes rownd as a circle compassed about with a stone wale, and within the wale close unto the wale are longe greate stones rownd aboutes the circle standynge uppon there endes in the grounde, that a man woulde wonder where in these partes such stones weare to bee found, and howe they weare foe sett uppon there endes in the grownd. There are of these stones nowe standynge in this

circle, as I take ytt, twelve, wherof some of them are ij. yardes and three quarters, some two yardes, some a yarde and three quarters above grownd, besydes what is within the grownd; the cyrcle within these long stones, which wee call Meini Hirion, is every way in breadth some fixe and twenty yardes; this standes uppon the playne mownteine as soone as you come to the height, and hath much playne even grownd aboutes ytt. Ytt shoulde seeme that this was a place wherunto the auncient Brittaines came from the Dinas aforesayd to encampe themselves and trayne there souldiers; ytt standes in a place fytted for justes and turnamentes, and this cyrcle thus rounded with these long stones might bee the place where the kinges tente was pitched; and neere to this circle there are three pretty bigg stones uppon there endes standynge triangle wiese lieke a tribbett, wheruppon as they say was sett a greate caudron to boyle meate in, and fuerly the three stones doe looke as yf they hadd beene longe in a greate fyre." It would seem that

the last-named stones, or at least two of them, are still preserved; and will be noticed in the right-hand corner of Mr. Longueville Jones's excellent sketch of the circle. Close by Meiniu Herion are the remains of another circle of smaller stones.

A short distance from this spot is a smooth round hill called Moelfre, upon which is a carnedd, covered with turf, about seventeen feet in diameter. I allude to it chiefly for the sake of introducing the following very curious unpublished notice of it which occurs in the manuscript of Sir John Wynn, previously quoted,—“Neare unto this place there is a ffyne delicate hill called Moelvre, rownd by nature and mownted very highe; and in the toppe very playne and pleasant uppon this hill there is a cyrcle marked, wheruppon stood three stones aboutes a yard and a quarter above grownd, the one redd as blood, the other white, and the thyrd a litle bluer then the white stone, standynge in triangle wiese. What shoulde bee the reason of placynge such three stones in such a place upon foe highe and foe plea-

fant a mounte, and to place there stones of such colloures, I cannott expresse otherwiese then wee have ytt by tradicion. The tradicion is this, that God Allmighty hath wrought in this place a miracle for increasyng of our fayth. And that was thus. Three women, aboutes such tyme as Christianity began to creepe in amongst us, uppon a Sabaoth day in the mornynge went to the toppe of this hill to wynowe there corne, and havynge spread there wynowyng sheete uppon the grownd and begunn there worke, some of there neightbours came unto them and did reprehend them for violatyng and breakynge the Lordes commaundement by workynge uppon the Saboathe day. These faythles women, regardynge there profytt more then the obsearvyng of God's commandements, made flight of there neightbours admonition, and healde on in there worke; wheruppon ytt pleased God instantly to transfourme them into three pillars of stones, and to frame these stones of the same collour as the womens clothes weare, one read, thother white, and the

thyrd bluiſhe, and to transfourme there winowyng ſheete and corne into earth, and ſoe to leave them there in example unto others. This is a tradicion wee have and beleevd by the ould people in that neighbourhood, and houſeover, whether ytt was ſoe or noe, the tradicion is wholeſome, and will deterr others from workynge uppon the Sabaoth day. Theſe ſtones, beyng worth the ſeynge as they weare there placed, have beene digged uppe by ſome idle headed youthes within this fixe yeeres, and weare rowled downe the hill, and doe nowe lye togyther att the foote of the hill." Sir John's obſervations on the wholeſomenefs of the tradition, independent of its truth, are not bad.

The beſt path of aſcent to the top of Penmaen-mawr is from the village of Llanfair Fechan, which is beginning to obtain repute as a watering-place, and is prettily ſituated on the brow of the hills to the weſtward of the mountain. This pariſh, obſerves the author of a Hiſtory of Caernarvonſhire, 1792, is "remarkable for the beauty of the ſite

and the earliness of the land. Here is a field that produces corn three weeks at least before any other in Wales. Probably this forwardness proceeds from the situation, rather than the richness of the soil. The foundation seems to be pebbles upon a bed of rock, which are covered with an artificial layer of good mould. When once the summer heats have pierced the outward coat, and imparted warmth to the pebbles, they retain more than an ordinary degree of heat, and force the superficies to throw out its produce with rapidity. In a wood called Coed Isfa are circles of stone, supposed to be druidical."

The next village in the direction of Bangor is the charmingly situated one of Aber, which lies at the entrance of one of the most beautiful glens in any part of Wales, winding upwards of two miles into the very bosom of the mountains. The name of it, in its full proportions, is Aber Gwynnegrin, the stream of the white shells, a name as pretty as the locality, derived, it is most probable, from the

large number of cockles once and perhaps now found near its mouth. At the entrance of the glen, in the middle of the village, at the back of some cottages, is a large artificial mound, called the Mwd, a sort of sugar-loaf about twenty-four feet high, and sixty feet in diameter, flattened at the top. This is said to be the site of a castle belonging to Prince Llewelyn, and where he received the summons from the English king to surrender the principality. The tradition was current in the sixteenth century at least, if not previously; and may probably be founded upon fact. Passing the village, we walk by the side of the little crystal stream, which is here washing romantic boulders only a few miles from its mountain home. The very shallowness of these beautiful streamlets add, in my mind, to their fascination; the water, sparkling in the sunshine over the bright-looking pebbles, imparting a grace to the scene that no deep river could effect. Hence onwards, over a rustic bridge, to a rising ground abounding in sea and land views

of a charming description. In fact, were it not that the sea-beach is unsuited for walking or bathing, Aber would unquestionably become the favourite place of resort on this coast. As it is, the village has lately made rapid progress. Where no long time ago were nought but squalid cottages, houses of some pretensions have been erected. The inn, the Bulkeley Arms, which till lately was only a small old-fashioned house, with one door and two parlours next the road, has been converted this year into a larger establishment, I presume expecting to be called an hotel. These modernizations do not improve the romance, nor always the comfort, of these mountain hamlets ; but if thus a larger number are enabled to enter into the enjoyment of the neighbouring scenery, we must not complain. It will be something to have seen them in their whilom primitive state.

At the extremity of the glen, two waterfalls, formed by streams taking their rise in boggy land near the summits of the mountains at some distance

beyond, are seen pouring down the flat surface of the nearly perpendicular cliffs. The largest and best is that to the left. It appears from a distance like a silver thread on the mountain slope, and its beauty and even grandeur will not be appreciated until the spectator stands immediately at the foot of the fall. Here we see the stream pouring down the scooped-out cliff in foam and spray, falling at the bottom into its time-worn stony basin, while a few scattered trees growing on the sides of the almost perpendicular rock increase the beauty of the scene. About a quarter of a mile to the right is another fall of very inferior volume, but of a greater height, and worth a visit were it merely to note the extremely graceful manner in which the water in some places glides over the fretted rock, giving the appearance of fine lace. The upper part of this fall appears to form a kind of curved direction over the worn rocks. This stream joins the other at a little distance below, whence the river is well worth following. It rushes through several wild ravines,

and many a winding nook, amidst brake and briar, and dark rocks, until it reaches the bridge, after which it glides more tranquilly in its journey to the sea.

There is a very pleasant walk over the hills on the western side of the valley, revealing a succession of charming views, turning to the left past the church and then upwards, skirting after a walk of two miles the side of Moel Wnion. Soon after this mountain is passed, turn to the left, following the course of a little streamlet, Afon y Garn, which falls into the Aber river half a mile below the cascade. When on the side of Moel Wnion, the upper course of the Aber above the fall is seen, meandering between the mountain summits, to great advantage. Some parts of the stream, Afon y Garn, have a singular appearance, the bottom being enamelled with a variety of coloured stones, chiefly of a red-dish colour, the hue arising from deposits of oxide of iron.

A good day at Aber for a five miles' roughish

walk to a lake unmentioned in any guide-book, or by any tourist, since the days of Henry the Eighth. And yet it is a spot approaching in wildness to the famed cwm of the Idwal. It is Leland, in his Itinerary, v. 44, who speaks of "Linne Mamavon, a little poole in Llechuethe Veba." This is all he says about it. It is now called Llyn Anafon. The best way to reach it from Aber is over the stone bridge, and then, after keeping to the road for about a mile, turn to the right along a path on the side of Foel Aduarth. This road can be followed till a sheep-pen near the stream is reached, after which there is no beaten track, but it is impossible to miss the way if the stream is kept in sight. The lake can also be reached from the Aber fall, by ascending to the left and passing along the side of the mountains bearing always to the left, but without passing the lake stream. This latter route is more circuitous and difficult, but furnishes the best views. The Anafon stream meets that of Aber a little above the bridge. Following its upward

course, for a short distance from this junction it rolls charmingly between wooded banks, after which its way is in a hollow between bleak mountains. Llyn Anafon is only a quarter of a mile wide, nearly the same size as Llyn Idwal, and similarly situated, in a basin, as it were, surrounded by lofty and barren rocks. The approach to it is singularly wild, the hills on either side being strewed with fragments of grey limestone, with hardly a blade of grass to relieve the barrenness of the scene. Stones, indeed, appear to be the only articles that come to maturity in this locality. The outlet from the lake presents a singular appearance, the water rolling under and between a wide space filled with masses of grey rock, which in many places completely hide the stream. On the left of this is a small bog, with a concave surface, which, although only three feet deep, is as well avoided. In a good light, with the surface of the lake reflecting like a mirror the shadows on the rocks, the effect is wonderfully fine. On a dark day, or towards evening, the scene is

one of indescribable gloom, partaking very much of the solemn character of the Idwal, although the rocks surrounding the latter are of a grander description.

From Llyn Anafon ascend the hills to the south-east, the summits of which yield fine views, some extending over the vale of the Conway, others over the pass of Nant Francon; but much of the ground hereabouts is very boggy, and, excepting in very fine settled weather, walks should not be taken in this direction without a guide. There is a tiny brook in this route, one of the several small channels that feed the lake. I allude to it for the sake of mentioning a singularly fashioned small fall of water, which rushes through a narrow trough formed of long slabs of stone, no less than eighty-two feet in length. Return to the lake, and taste, with a qualifying adjunct—a polite expression for a little brandy, which is at the service of the next guide-book maker, I mean the expression, not the brandy, the latter having been then and there taken.—But I am running away from my verb, and

have made the sentence too long for it. Return then to the lake, and there taste, with the qualification, some of its beautifully pure and cold water; and gaze on the grey cliffs of Llwydmor Achaf, as the later shadows of the sun are falling across them; and watch the trout rising to the surface literally in shoals, for no boat has yet traversed these waters, which no doubt conceal objects of unknown glory for the angler. This spot is reluctantly left for our home-return to Aber, and following the course of the stream, any one as passionately fond of any sort of natural cascade as myself may think it worth while to stop a few minutes at a very inclined fall, 180 feet in length, where the river, here of some width, passes over a succession of rocks disposed in stony crevices and flattened steps. The stream thence pursues its tortuous way, between lofty sloping hills mostly covered with grass and fern,

Aber was in former days the point of departure to Beaumaris across the Lavan sands, which are uncovered to an immense distance at low water, and

can then be traversed on foot the whole way with the exception of a short ferry that must be crossed near the latter town. There was frequently some danger incurred in the passage, and many stories of hair-breadth escapes, owing to the unexpected return of the tide, have been related. One of the most curious is that told in the autobiography of Sir John Bramston, who passed the sands in the year 1631,—“One Mr. Fountain and Sir Thomas Cary went along with us, and passinge over the mountains Pen Men Maure, in the narrow passage wee met a gentleman of whome Mr. Fountain and Sir Thomas inquired how the tyde was, whoe told them we might pass well if wee made hast; foe they putt on, wee following, not knowinge what had passed. Soe soone as they were downe the mountaine they fell to gallopinge. Neither my father nor my selfe understood at first the meaninge; but findinge the water grow deeper, for it came in rills, wee suspected the sea might be cominge in, as it was, and foe I desired my father to

gallop too. The sands, save only in those rills, were carpet wayes. At last wee came to the place where they were (I meane Sir Thomas and Mr. Fountain) expectinge the ferrie boat, which was at Beaumaris and the ferrimen drinkinge. We all made as loud a call as we could. We did see some fisherboats, and beinge in great perplexitie and feare, we all rode on brest up the streame, purposeinge to trie if our horses (the worst comeing to the worst) would carrie us over. I askt my father if he could swim ; he sayd when he was younge he could. Sayd I, Wee will keepe up the tyde, with the helpe of our horses, and by swymminge, we may either gett over, or else some of the boates may take us in. At last the ferriemen sett out and came to us, tellinge us we were in noe dainger ; but by such tyme as we and our horses were on board, a ship might have rode betweene us and the shoare behind us, and all was covered with water where wee stood longe before we gott to Beaumaris. There wee lay that night, and the next morninge wee rode to

Hollichead, where we stayd expecting a wind, and the Welch parson putt himselfe to the truble to prepare an English sermon against Sunday, but the wind beinge faire on Sunday morninge we went on board, and left our host, black Hugh, and the parson, to eate what was prepared for dinner."

In the last century, posts were placed to guide the direction of the tourist to Aber, where, in foggy weather, the church bell used to be rung for a like purpose. The passage is still frequently made by the country people, but very seldom by strangers.

A few minutes on by the rail, and the tourist arrives at Bangor, situated in a narrow valley between flaty rocks. A new town is now springing up on the western heights, in a remarkably fine situation, abounding in walks that reveal a great variety of landscape. In fact, all the hills about Bangor furnish beautiful combinations of scenery in nearly every direction, whether we look towards the mountains, the sea, or the plains. The town has made great progress of late years. Dr. Johnson

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notes it in 1774 as possessing "a very mean inn," where he had some difficulty in obtaining a lodging, and where at last he was compelled to "lay in a room where the other bed had two men." Hutton, in 1803, speaks of it as then consisting of a single street comprising ninety-two houses; so that it must have remained stagnant for two centuries, the latter description well applying to the town as delineated in Speed's maps, 1608. At that time there was only one house in Upper Bangor. Both towns are now crowded every summer by tourists, who pay dutiful visits to all the prescribed lions, such as the bridges, Beaumaris Castle, the Anglesea column, and Puffin island; and, to say the truth, are not ill-advised, for the unnoted routes in the neighbourhood do not yield much of a high degree of interest.

To those, however, who can appreciate beauty, unaccompanied with grandeur, I can recommend a walk to the half-way house, a small inn close to the bridge over the Ogwen three miles from Bangor on the road to Bethesda. Turn by a footpath on the

side of this inn, and follow up for a short distance the minute streamlet which here falls into the Ogwen. In a few minutes the stream is divided into two branches, and on the one to the right is a small cascade, embosomed in the trees, surpassingly beautiful when seen, as I have seen it, full of water, the rays of the sun falling upon it through the fantastic network of branches by which it is encompassed. This tiny cascade is only about fifteen feet high and four feet wide, the water falling over four stony ledges, distributing itself at the bottom amidst scattered boulders. When quite full of water, the whole of the bottom rock is covered with foam, with the exception of about a foot of width on the extreme left, where the water falls more calmly over a smooth stone. This streamlet, dignified by the appellation of Afon-y-Llan, takes its rise in the mountain above the village of Llanllechid, to which is a charming walk, chiefly by the side of the stream, the diminutive size of which may be imagined from the statement that it varies in width from two to six

feet. The most striking part of the rivulet is near a cottage on the left of the footpath about half way to the village, where the brook for a short space is divided into four or five narrow channels, meandering through a grass plot interspersed with grey boulders. A little below is an insignificant cascade, rather more than twenty feet in height, the first fall of six feet spreading over a large rock thirteen feet wide, then narrowing over four feet more of fall, the larger and lowest being about eleven feet in depth, falling in three divisions over two large boulders and several smaller ones. Neither of these cascades, if they deserve such an appellation, would be worthy of note were it not for the manner in which the water, rocks, and trees are distributed. A few strokes of the axe, and what is now a charming picture may be turned into a trifling fall of water undeserving of notice by either the artist or tourist.

In the fields near Llanllechid may be noticed boundary walls of dry stones, perhaps ancient, of

the enormous thickness of four feet. The views of Nant Francon, part of the Snowdon range of mountains, and Anglesea, are here fine and extensive. When at the village, note, on the right, Moel Faban, and the curious hollow, Ffos.Rhufeiniad; and, on the left, Moel Wnion. The village is small, and modernized. Walk home to Bangor through the small village of Maes-y-Groes, a country road chiefly on a descent, thence over the Ogwen and through Llandegai. In this road, a tiny streamlet from Moel Wnion, which empties itself into the Ogwen a little below Penrhyn Park, is passed three times. Moel Wnion is a romantic name. It means, being interpreted, the fairies' hill. These pretty creatures are there no longer. It would be strange indeed if they could find a spot for their dances and revels in the vicinity of a slate-quarry.

It may here be worth mentioning, as an excuse for a discursive walk from Llandegai, that at the base of the mountain called Moelycci, is an interesting specimen of an ancient British camp, which is

probably unnoticed in any work. A small portion of it has been levelled by the plough, but about two-thirds of it is quite perfect. It partakes of the usual character of such remains; a circular flat top, surrounded by a wide trench, beneath which is another embankment, both circular. The approach to this camp from Bangor is through Llandegai, then turning to the right past a farm house called Cefn-y-coed, until the base of the mountain is reached. The camp is about a quarter of a mile from the farm house at the foot of Moelycci. Returning to Bangor, diverge a little from the road to visit the small pool termed Llyn Cororion, so called from the ancient name of Llandegai. It is a diminutive lake of clear water, calmly reposing in the midst of green meadows, and frequented by numerous wild-fowl. In a field in the neighbourhood are three upright stones, possibly a fragment of an ancient British circle.

Bethesda and the Slate Quarries are visited by all tourists to Bangor, the former solely for the sake of

the latter, for it is a poor town, inhabited chiefly by quarrymen. Here the cry of children, too often heard in Wales, for a ha'pennce, a ha'pennce, seems to be a kind of institution. The quarries, now so extensive, were not worked to much purpose until 1782, when the then Lord Penrhyn embarked large sums in them. Before that period, barely eighty persons in all were engaged here in the obtaining and the preparation of the slates; and the work was done in a manner very different to what is the fashion now. Even at the commencement of the present century, the slates here were partly excavated by quarrymen who were suspended from the tops of the cliffs by ropes attached to a wooden ledge. The quarries now, it is said, occupy the labours of 2,500 individuals. "Fortune on his quarry smiling," *Macbeth*. At a mile from Bethesda is Ogwen Bank, a charming retreat amidst plantations and shrubs at a spot where a century ago nought but barren rock was visible. The Ogwen here falls in a wide and romantic cascade over a variety of

disjointed rocks about fifteen feet in height. At Tyn-y-maes, a mile and a half further on, formerly a station on the old Holyhead road, the splendid pass of Nant Francon commences; a pass which is always grand and striking, but seen, as we have seen it, with a full moon passing through changing clouds, casting its shadows on them as they rolled in heavy and constantly changing masses between the mountains, there is an impression of grandeur far beyond that made by any other scene I have yet witnessed in this country. The pass itself, about three miles long, is situated between two solemn mountain ranges, the river Ogwen flowing at the bottom, amidst dark fields of peat. The wildness of Nant Francon, though still striking, must now, with its fine roads, convey a small idea of its state in ancient times, when the Welsh prophet, who ventured to predict that a path would be formed through it, was accounted a madman. Even late in the last century, the route along its side was described as one of the worst bridle-paths in all Wales.

At the extremity of the pass, we arrive at the falls of the Benglog, three fine cataracts formed by the overflow from Llyn Ogwen. Unfortunately, the three falls are so arranged that they cannot be seen at one view ; and the tourist must encounter a good deal of climbing and scrambling if he wishes to view any of them to advantage. "The highest fall," observes Bingley, "is grand and majestic, yet by no means equal to the other two. At the second or middle fall the river is precipitated, in a fine stream, through a chasm between two perpendicular rocks that each rise several yards above. The mountain Trivaen fills up the wide space at the top, and forms a rude and sublime distance. The stream widens as it descends, and below passes over a slanting rock, which gives it a somewhat different direction. In the foreground is the rugged bed of the stream, and the water is seen to dash in various directions among the broken masses of rock. Descending a rocky steep, he will reach the lowest fall. Here the stream roars with vast fury, and in one

sheet of foam, down an unbroken and almost perpendicular rock. The roar of the water and the broken and uncouth disposition of the surrounding rocks add greatly to the interest of the scene." The appearance of the river Ogwen between the lake and the bridge is curious, running over a wide space interspersed with fragments of rock, the waters then concentrating and falling with tremendous force just under the bridge.

An ascending walk of half a mile from the Benglog falls leads to an elevated recess in the mountains, a kind of stony bowl surrounded on the further side by dark lofty perpendicular cliffs, in which is the gloomy lake, Llyn Idwal. Leland, in the sixteenth century, speaks of it as "a smaule pole wher they say that Idwalle, Prince of Wales, was killid and drounid." There is a ridge of rising ground, near the lake, under which tradition says that he is buried. His murderer was his foster-father,—“no human ear but Dunawt's heard, young Idwal's dying scream." This lake, owing to its peculiar

position, is agitated like the sea in a storm when violent gusts of wind rush down the ravine. Even a slight breeze will change the aspect of its surface in an almost incredible manner. In the rocks at the further end of the lake will be observed a large rent or chasm, not far short of five hundred feet in depth, called Tull Du, the Black Cleft, down which the water rushes from Llyn y Cwm, a tiny pool on the top of the mountain. The stream falls at the bottom of the chasm, forming a number of small hollows in the stone, popularly called the devil's pans, the place itself bearing the name of the devil's kitchen. The overflow of Llyn Idwal forms a small but pretty streamlet, which falls into the Ogwen just below the second cataract of Benglog, forming there of itself a cascade falling over a large smooth inclined rock in a wide sheet of water.

High up amongst the rocks, on the left hand in going up to Llyn Idwal, is a very small pool, Llyn Bochlyd, the waters of which overflow at a great elevation, and fall into the Ogwen lake. There is

nothing remarkable in this fall, a great portion of it being concealed by the rocks, and the volume of water being generally insignificant.

Llyn Ogwen is a lake about three-quarters of a mile long, nearly surrounded by lofty precipices. The road passes along its side, following the course of Afon Llugwy, through a wild but fine pass, until we reach Capel Curig, which is exquisitely situated in the midst of beautiful but somewhat gloomy mountain scenery. The small lakes here owe their attraction to their fine situation amidst some of the loftiest mountains in the Principality, in a solitude that would be complete were it not for that rambling inn, which anything but graces the brow of the adjacent slope.

To turn to a prosaic and unromantic subject, but one which, if not speedily considered, will send both tourists and romance out of Wales, it was with regret I here observed that the drainage of the inn was diverted into the lake. To be sure, the drainage of one house, however large, would be attended

with an inappreciable effect; but if the system once spreads, and is generally adopted, the consequences will be disastrous. Neither the Welsh lakes nor streams are large enough to bear the diversion of sewerage into them with impunity; and, as the various places of resort become more built upon, if other plans of drainage be not adopted, the beautiful cascades of Wales, and its silvery streams, will be turned from with displeasure, instead of, as now, proving the great attraction to the visitor. There is also a tendency to diminish the volume of water in several of the streams by collecting it into reservoirs for the supply of towns. In this way, that once impetuous little river, Avon Gafeg, which passes the road near Bethesda, and which formerly was in such a hurry to get into the Ogwen that it is said to have presented a sheet of white foam visible at the distance of fifteen miles, is ruined by the water-works that supply Bangor. This is bad enough; but if, in addition, our beautiful streamlets are to receive the annually increasing volume of liquid

house drainage, it needs no ghost to come and tell us that we shall ere long be glad to get out of their way. Only fancy if that most charming little river Ogwen be eventually bricked over, when Bethesda is a large city, to form its main sewer! More unlikely things have happened; but the very idea makes one's flesh creep, and induces me to entertain a serious doubt if the system of dilution is one which in the long run will not involve greater evils than those it is now believed to remedy.

The road from Capel Curig to Bettws-y-coed, passing along the beautiful valley of the rapid river Llugwy, is perhaps one of the most charming in North Wales. At the distance of a mile and a half, at the bridge called Pont Gyfyng, is a fine bold cascade about fifty feet high, falling over ledges, the stream in several places divided by projecting rocks. Two miles and a half beyond this spot is Rhaiadar y Wennol, the waterfall of the Swallow, a cascade which, in dry weather, is extremely pleasing and beautiful; and, in a flood, the

grandest probably in this country. Although close to the road, it is completely hidden from the view of the passer-by, by thick plantations; but there is a pathway formed to the lower part of the fall, and there is that prosaic article, here quite unnecessary, a guide to show you what you can see yourself at noon. She might possibly be useful in dim moonlight. A lively tourist, Mr. Baker, well observes,—“I like to visit castles, churches, and waterfalls by myself, when I can take my own time, and indulge my own thoughts, without having my fairy imaginings interrupted, as they were at the Swallow Falls, something after this manner:—‘This is the Swallow Fall, sir; very pretty, sir; another view above, sir;’ and then, after a repetition of the trot, to the utter confusion of one’s breathing apparatus—‘Sorry there is not much water, sir; weather too dry, sir; last week, sir, very grand, sir.’ This brief address terminated with a look that meant sixpence, if ever there could be a silvery look, as well as silvery words.”

The river at the Swallow Falls tumbles over a very wide ledge, first falling for a short space over rectangular rocks, then rolling down a long flat incline, at the bottom of which is a short perpendicular fall, where the water with gathered strength dashes upon the dark rocks in sheets of foam. At various parts of the fall, numerous masses of protruding rock are ledged, opposing the fury of the water, and sending it, in floods, foaming in all directions. In dry weather, the effect is simply picturesque; and no one, who has not seen the falls after rainy weather, can form any idea of their magnificent character at such times. The cataracts of Wales are, indeed, generally seen to great disadvantage; the dry summer weather coveted by tourists being just the kind that converts many a beautiful cascade into a rocky gully. Well, we can't have our cake and eat it too; so let those who are inclined to find fault with our waterfalls pause first to consider if the blame should not be thrown upon their fear of getting a wetting. Both mountains and cataracts are best seen in a grand summer tempest.

Rhaiadar y Wennol is said to be about sixty feet high, a measurement insignificant when compared with that of Piftyll Rhaiadr near Llanrhaiadr, where the impetuous river Rhaiadr rushes over a nearly perpendicular rock upwards of two hundred and forty feet in height! Yet so little has mere magnitude the power to control a decision, no one can deny but that the Swallow Falls are not only more picturesque, but even far grander than the latter. These dimensions, and those of most of the other falls here noted, are taken from the guide books; but I have a suspicion that there has been a great deal of guess-work in the matter, and that the altitudes have not been ascertained by actual measurement. So my nephew and myself went out one day on a cataract survey, the former not at all understanding the use or fun of the matter, but well content to have a day's holiday. My apparatus was a very simple one, consisting merely of a long pole, and a stout rope about 250 feet long, the latter having a weight attached to one end. With this,

I expected to be enabled to compass the exact length by gently lowering the rope from the top of the falls. "Pardon me, uncle," said my impudent young companion, "but if any people happen to pass while you are at this work, they will certainly think that you have got a slate off." I could not but laugh, having nearly come to a similar conclusion myself. In fact, I had overlooked the continual lodgements that the weight would make in the various ledges of the rocks, so that the contrivance was useless excepting where the water descended over a smooth surface. Moreover, we found that, as a general rule, the process, owing to the smoothness and slippery nature of the rocks, was attended with dangers that were not worth encountering for such an object.

There is a pleasant but rather hilly walk from Bangor through Pentir to the interesting encampment of Dinas Dinorwig. Pentir is a small neat village, with a new church, the old one having been pulled down a few years ago. The same note

applies to the village of Llanddeiniolen, a little further on, where the only appearance of antiquity connected with the church arises from three very large yew trees in the churchyard, one of them being not far short of thirty feet in diameter. It is to be feared that many an interesting relic of antiquity is destroyed by this rage for modernization. This last-named village comprises only two old stone cottages close to the church, and a few small houses scattered in the neighbourhood. About half-a-mile to the south-east is Dinas Dinorwig, one of the most perfect ancient British encampments now remaining in Wales. It consists of three trenches nearly circular, one above the other, the top being a large round flat. One end appears to be protected by a natural rock, but in that part the form of the fortification is not easily traced. The best account I have met with of this camp is that given by Dr. Williams, who thus describes it,—“This British encampment is surrounded by an agger of small stones, backed by another of very large ones; then

succeeds a deep ditch or fosse, a rampart of earth, and a second vast ditch ; another enormous rampart of earth, measuring from top to the bottom fifty feet, and another ditch, which also appears to have been used as a road to and from the different entrances. It is not entirely surrounded by these ramparts, but only for about three-fourths of its extent. On the northern side is a steep ascent, terminated by a very precipitous rock, a sufficient natural defence. Within the area, near the rock above mentioned, is a circle of stones, the post, as Pennant supposes, of the commander-in-chief. It appears to have had five gateways or entrances, the main ones looking east and west ; two on either side of the rock before mentioned, and one on the south-east side ; the stones, forming the entrances, being still distinctly visible. It is not circular in the whole of its extent, but only forms a portion of a circle. That part surrounded by the ramparts is very nearly circular. It then runs into a pyraform shape, so as to take advantage of the strong natural

barrier. The area thus enclosed is very extensive, measuring from 90 to 100 yards from east to west, but from the point of the rock to the furthest extremity of the circle, 150 yards. On the eastern side is another smaller enclosure, round which the road winds from the bottom of the hill, and has an entrance through the outer or larger rampart. This rampart appears to have been continued by the side of the road round the smaller camp, thus placing it within the outer or larger rampart, but without the small ones." The same writer tells us of various ancient British remains in the neighbourhood. He also mentions a large rocking-stone, weighing from ten to fifteen tons, so balanced that a child can move it with ease. We were not fortunate enough to discover this relic. In fact, the only stone we could find at all answering the description remained immovable, not only defying the united exertions of our party, but also the additional pressure of an old cow, who opportunely assisted the attempted movement by resorting to what was evidently a favourite corner for rubbing her sides.

Leaving Dinas Dinorwig, a short walk into the plain towards Llanberris, a wild, boggy, uncultivated district, brings us to a chalybeate spring called Ffynon Cegin Arthur, or the Water of Arthur's Kitchen, which empties itself into the Aber Cegin, the small streamlet which falls into the sea between Bangor and Penrhyn. The water is a strong chalybeate, and was formerly in much repute. After having been neglected for upwards of a century, it has been brought into note again recently, a small bath and a cottage for an attendant having been erected on the spot, the remains of the old stone bath being now concealed. Pennant says that it is the source of the Aber Cegin, but it may be more correctly described as one and the least of the sources, the main supply of water in that stream coming from a bog about half-a-mile to the eastward. Pennant's statement, however, agrees with that in an old Welsh poem, entitled,—“Cyngor i wneuthur Pont y Marchogion y Penrhyn ar afon fydd yn eodi lle y bu Gegin Tywyfog Arthur, yn

Llys Dinordde, ym mhlwyf Llan-Ddaniolen, ac a elwir Afon Gegin, yn agos i Fangor-fawr-ying Ngwynedd,—An Advice to erect a Bridge of the Knights of Penrhyn, over the River that springs where the Kitchen of Prince Arthur stood at Dinordde Hall, in the parish of Llanddeiniolen, which is called Afon Gegin, near Bangor Fawr in Gwynedd (Venedotia).” To those who have seen this diminutive streamlet, the following notice of it, extracted from this poem, will appear somewhat exaggerated,—“Thence the salubrious current meanders past the Weir, where the Menai, of finest refreshment, flows full into it;—Here the River boils like yeast, mixing freshwater with brine, and the Menai damming it up at flowing and ebbing.” One only wonders what a poet, who can write thus of a brook a few feet wide, would make of the waters of Niagara.

Taking the rail to Carnarvon, we get into a new line of excursions. Its magnificent Castle has been too often described to need a notice here, so we will

pass on to Bethgelert for a day, stopping, of course, to visit the small but beautiful cascade of Nant Mill, where the stream from Llyn Cwellyn passes over some rocks, perhaps in all about forty feet in depth, but not in one fall. It commences by rushing over a rock six feet high, then falling over an inclined surface which narrows between two rocks, afterwards widening over a number of crooked stony steps. An old mill on the left-hand side adds to the picturesque character of the cascade, which, in the opinion of artists, is one of the most beautiful in Wales. About a mile-and-a-half further on is Llyn Cwellyn, a lake upwards of a mile in length; and at a short distance beyond this, note a well-known quaintly-formed rock, called Pitt's Head, so named from a fancied resemblance it bears to the countenance of that celebrated statesman. Bethgelert is then soon reached, and we of course see the grave of the hound, the faithful Gelert; and the romantic bridge in the ravine at the entrance into Merionethshire, Pont Aberglaslyn. We re-

turned to Bangor by the other road, passing by the side of the beautiful lake, Llyn Gwynant, and then through Nant Gwynant, to the left of which the falls of the Cwm Dyli appeared, in the distance, very like clothes laid out to dry on the mountain side. Our road then lay through part of the pass of Llanberis, to Capel Curig, and so, through Nant Francon, home.

Shortly after passing Llyn Cwellyn, about three quarters of a mile to the right of the road, is the very small and oddly-shaped, but celebrated, lake of Llyn-y-dywarchen. This pool was visited by Giraldus Cambrensis as early as the year 1188, and he says that it had a floating island in it, which, he adds, "is often driven from one side to the other by the force of the winds; and the shepherds behold with astonishment their cattle whilst feeding carried to the distant parts of the lake." Leland, in the time of Henry the Eighth, speaks of this as "the Swymming Island." It appears to have been merely a detached piece of turbary, which is now

no longer to be seen, although such a curiosity certainly existed in Pennant's time. The lake and the island are introduced by Wilson into one of his pictures. It is said that the artist was for a long time puzzled how to give a notion of the phenomenon in a painting, but at length he conquered the difficulty by depicting a man standing on the island in the act of wafting it nearer the shore with the aid of a long staff.

Halley, the celebrated astronomer, who visited this lake in the year 1697, gives the following interesting account of it in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1698, p. 584,—“ In one of these lakes I was on board a floating island, as it may be called ; the lake is scarce half-a-mile about, environed with a boggy turfy soil, a piece of which, about six yards long and four broad, floats on the water, being about five or six inches raised above it, but is, I believe, about eighteen inches deep within the water, having broad spreading fungous roots on its sides, the lightness of which buoys it up. It was

driven on the lee shore, but I lanced it off and swam it, to be satisfied it floated. This I take the more notice of, because it is denied to be true by the author of the additions to Camden, lately published; but I myself saw it as described, and was told it had formerly been bigger, there being a lesser spot that they told us had been heretofore a part thereof, which floated likewise."

Snowdon and Llanberis should not have been left to the last, but better late than never. They make objects for a long day's excursion from Bangor, too much in general for the time of year we visited them, October the 6th, but the weather was very fine, and we got to and from the summit under a delightful sky. Snowdon is only 3,571 feet in height, and the ascent from Dolbadarn may now be denominated "mountain made easy;" but we must not too readily laugh at the apparently inflated accounts of the difficulties encountered by the early tourists. When Llanberis could only be traversed by a horse-path so rugged that much of

it was like going up and down rough stone stairs, and before any ways were formed on the mountain, the ascent could have been no easy task, especially if the weather were unfavourable. Even now, with

the road to the summit becoming easier every year by improvements made in it, there are spots that will try weak nerves, and danger of

N.B.—Pennant, in 1780, describes a certain mountain as rugged and difficult of access. Mr. John Robinson, junior, in the year 1860, gets to the top with ease, and sets down our author, to use his own words, as an exaggerating old party. My good friend, if you had attempted the ascent in Pennant's time, before the rude pathway had been formed, you'd have broken your neck.

life incurred from sudden mists by those adventurous enough to travel without a guide. The Llanberis route is about five miles to the top, a fair walk on such a steep ascent. The other approaches to it are more difficult and less frequented. All of them are, however, so well known, it will not do to add another account of an ascent of Snowdon to the numbers already published; but there may be some interest and novelty attached to a brief notice of some of the earlier journeys made to the summit.

The mountain must have been occasionally ascended from a very ancient period ; but the earliest descriptive account of any one going to the top of it, and that a very brief one, that I have met with, occurs in the botanical tour of Thomas Johnson, the naturalist, made in the year 1639. He seems to have ascended from the Llanberis side. His words are, literally translated,—“ At daybreak, on the third of August, having mounted our horses, we proceeded to the British Alps. The highest mountain of all these is called by the English, Snowdon, and by the Welsh, Widhfa. Desiring to see this, we obtained a boy for our guide, because not only the summit, but the whole mountain, was veiled in clouds. Then leaving our horses and our outer garments, we began to ascend the mountain. The first ascent is difficult, but afterwards it spreads out into a wider space, but equally steep ; to the left, immense precipices ; to the right, a difficult slope. Thus having gone three miles, we at length reached the very top of the mountain,

which was veiled in thick clouds. Here the way is rather narrow, and precipices rough with sharp crags on both sides strike the utmost horror into those who are ascending. Here and there also Stygian lakes, the greatest of which is called by the natives the Devil's House. When we had attained the utmost point of the ridge, we sat down amongst the clouds, and first arranged in order the plants we had collected perilously amongst the rocks and precipices, and then partook of the luncheon that we had brought with us."

Johnson then gives a list of the plants he found on Snowdon, which is no doubt the first Snowdonian flora ever formed. He does not pretend that the catalogue is complete, restricting it to the enumeration of those he considered best worth notice. The following are the names of the plants he mentions:—" *Nasturtium petræum*; *oxalis rotundifolia*, French forrell or round-leaved forrell; *viola martia palustris*, red violet; *serpillum hirsutum*, hoary wilde time; *rhodia radix*, rosewort or rose-

roote; *caryophyllus montanus minimus*, mosse-pinkes or dwarfe mountaine pinkes; *sedum rotundifolium ferratum*, the prince's feather; *sedum minus flore albido*, white fengreene of the Alpes; *sedum tridactylites*, handed housleeke or fengreene; *cotyledon five sedum petræum hirsutum*, hairy kidneywort, upon the moyft rockes at Snowdon; *gentianella Bavarica*, dwarfe gentian; *gramen sparteum spica foliacea minus*, the lesser grasse-eared grasse, or grasse upon grasse; *muscus cupressi facie*, heath cypres; *muscus ceranoides*, horned mofs; *carduus mollis*, thistle gentle, growes on the rockes on the highest part of Snowdon; *salix humilis saxatilis*, round-leaved mountaine willow; *felix petræa elegans*, rocke fern; *gramen junceum marinum*, sea rush-grasse; *caryophyllum marinum*; *lychnidem marinam Anglicam*."

During the seventeenth century, the mountain was not ascended by travellers, excepting for scientific purposes. Caswell went up to measure its height, and made it 3,720 feet. The more cele-

brated Halley ascended it on May 26th, 1697, in order to make some scientific experiments on what he calls "this horrid spot of hills." "We saw," he observes, "Ireland plainly, and the mountains of Cumberland or Westmoreland very faintly, but evidently in the north; and I think we saw as far as St. David's head into the south. Carnarvonshire and Anglesey lay under us like a map, affording a very pleasant prospect, were it not for the horrors of the neighbouring precipices. Hence we counted fifteen or sixteen lakes, great and small, where the cavities of the rocks are filled up with the rills that gleet from the hills. All these are said to abound with trouts, some of which we found to be especial good fish."

It was not until the middle of the last century that an ascent to the summit of Snowdon became a popular undertaking with tourists; and it was some years after that time, before any accounts of the journey were published. Lord Lyttelton, who passed the foot of the mountain in 1756, was de-

tered by the weather from going up to the top. The earliest printed narrative that I can discover is an extremely meagre one in a little volume called *Letters from Snowdon*, 1770. The writer appears to have ascended from the Snowdon Ranger, or from that locality, on the shores of Llyn Cwellyn; but he gives no information of any value, and that which he does give is hardly to be depended upon. It is interesting, however, as the earliest tourist's account of the ascent:—"I had long a desire of visiting the Welsh Alps, the summit of Snowdon. The curate was so much devoted to me, that I did not employ my rhetoric long before I prevailed upon him to accompany me in the expedition. We set out from our hermitage in the month of July. We arrived in the evening at a small thatched hut at the foot of the mountain, near a lake which they call Llyn Cychwhechlyn, which I leave you to pronounce as well as you are able. At this hut we found a poor labouring man, with five or six children, the pictures of health and innocence. We

had brought provisions with us for our journey, and we regaled ourselves in this situation, the family partaking of our feast with more satisfaction and glee than I have ever found at a nobleman's entertainment. At the dawn of day, we began our journey up the mountain, which seemed to scale the heavens. We found a great change in the temperature of the atmosphere, as we ascended. When we had gone half way up, we found the wind rather high, attended with scudding clouds; but when we arrived at the summit, the air was calm and serene, and seemed much more subtle and rarified, less impregnated with vapors, and more agreeable for respiration. How shall I describe to you the infinitely extensive and variegated prospects we enjoyed from the summit? Lakes, mountains, seas, rivers, plains, woods, and islands, lay before us in the greatest diversity. We saw distinctly the north of England, the greatest part of Wales, Cheshire, Shropshire, Ireland, the Isle of Man, and Scotland. I doubt whether so extensive a circular

prospect is to be seen in any part of the terraqueous globe. The sun had now gained its meridian height, and shot forth its noontide rays with unusual fervor. When we began to descend the hill, we perceived a small murky cloud rise out of the sea. The cloud condensed and increased until the whole atmosphere became enveloped in darkness, and night seemed to have regained her ebon throne. Neither house nor tree was near to afford us protection, but all was one vast continued waste. In this situation we could only have recourse to the hospitable shelter of the next impending rock. Here we awaited, with fear and impatience, till the storm was spent. When the storm was appeased, and the face of heaven had reassumed its wonted serenity, we continued our journey. Pleased, though fatigued with our excursion, we regained our homely dwelling."

The next recorded ascent is that of one made by Joseph Cradock late in the year 1776,—“I passed my evening at a very good inn at Carnarvon, and

having procured an intelligent guide, returned early next morning through Bettus to the foot of Snowdon. Having left my horses at a small hut, and hired a mountaineer to carry some cordials and provisions, with a spiked stick, but imprudently without nails in my shoes, about ten o'clock I began to ascend the mountain. The two first miles were rather boggy and disagreeable, but when the prospect opened, I soon forgot all difficulties. In the course of the two last I passed by six precipices, which I believe were very formidable, but as I was near the brink, and the wind very high, I did not venture to examine too narrowly. On the summit, which is a plain about six yards in circumference, the air was perfectly mild and serene, and I could with pleasure contemplate the amazing map that was unfolded to my view. From hence may be distinctly seen Wicklow hills in Ireland, the Isle of Man, Cumberland, Lancashire, Cheshire, Shropshire, and part of Scotland; all the counties of North Wales; the Isle of Anglesea; rivers, plains,

woods, rocks, and mountains, six-and-twenty lakes, and two seas." Cradock made the descent on the Llanberris side, passing the waterfall of Caunant Mawr.

From these barren notices, it is a pleasure to turn to the lucid narrative of the third historian of the ascent, the accurate Pennant, who gives an account of two tours to the summit in a work published in 1781. Pennant's description has scarcely been surpassed in neatness and point by any of his successors.

He commenced the ascent, as is usual now, past Caunant Mawr, but the route taken after that was much more circuitous than the present one. His words are,—“Ascend above Cwm Brwynog, a very deep bottom, fertile in Gwair y Rhofydd, which is composed chiefly of different kinds of rushes, particularly *juncus squarrosus*, the moss-rush; *scirpus cæspitosus*, the heath club rush; *schænus nigricans*, the black bog rush, and *carexes*, intermixed with few kinds of grass. The hay which the lower meadows produce is very different in

quality, being remarkably fine and soft ; and consists in great part of the fine bent grass, *agrostis capillaris*. In the course of our ascent, saw on the left, above the cwm, Moel y Cynhorion, or the Hill of Council. Pass through Bwlch y Maefcwm, and skirt the side of Snowdon, till we reach Bwlch y Cwm Brynog, where the ascent becomes very difficult by reason of its vast steepness. People here usually quit their horses. We began a toilsome march, clambering among the rocks. On the left were the precipices over Cwm Brynog, with Llyn du yr Arddwy at their foot. On our right were those over the small lakes, Llyn Glas, Llyn-y-Nadroedd, and Llyn Coch. The last is the highest on this side of the mountain ; and on whose margins we were told that, in fairy days, those diminutive gentry kept their revels. This space between precipice and precipice forms a short and no very agreeable isthmus, till we reached a verdant expanse, which gave us some respite, before we laboured up another series of broken crags. After these is a

second smooth tract, which reaches almost to the summit, which, by way of pre-eminence, is styled Y Wyddfa, or The Conspicuous. It rises almost to a point, or, at best, there is but room for a circular wall of loose stones, within which travellers usually take their repast. The mountain from hence seems propped by four vast buttresses; between which are four deep cwms or hollows. Each, excepting one, had one or more lakes lodged in its distant bottom. The nearest was Ffynnon Las, or the Green Well, lying immediately below us. One of the company had the curiosity to descend a very bad way to a jutting rock that impended over the monstrous precipice; and he seemed like Mercury ready to take his flight from the summit of Atlas. The waters of Ffynnon Las from this height appeared black and unfathomable, and the edges quite green. From thence is a succession of bottoms, surrounded by the most lofty and rugged hills, the greatest part of whose sides are quite mural, and form the most magnificent amphitheatre in nature.

The Wyddfa is on one side ; Crib y Distill, with its serrated tops, on another ; Crib Coch, a ridge of fiery redness, appears beneath the preceding ; and opposite to it is the boundary called the Lliwedd. Another very singular support to this mountain is Y Clawdd Coch, rising into a sharp ridge, so narrow as not to afford breadth even for a path. The view from this exalted situation is unbounded. In a former tour, I saw from it the county of Chester, the high hills of Yorkshire, part of the north of England, Scotland, and Ireland ; a plain view of the Isle of Man ; and that of Anglesea lay extended like a map beneath us, with every rill visible. I counted at this time between twenty and thirty lakes either in this county or in Meirionyddshire. On the present occasion, the sky was obscured very soon after I got up. A vast mist enveloped the whole circuit of the mountain. The prospect down was horrible. It gave an idea of numbers of abysses, concealed by a thick smoke furiously circulating around us. Very often a gust of wind formed an

were dancing one night near Llyn Cwellyn, when a young man, who had hidden himself in a thicket, rushed out and seized a beautiful fay, whom, it is needless to add, was a lady. The rest instantly vanished, while he brought his prize in triumph home. After many entreaties, she consented to become his wife on condition that, if he should ever strike her with cold iron, she would leave him for ever. The happy swain had no difficulty in entering into an engagement so readily, as he thought, observed. They were married, and, in course of time, a son and daughter appeared on the scene; but unfortunately one day, in throwing a missile at a horse, it hit his fairy wife, who instantaneously disappeared, and for ever. Her beautiful face was never again beheld by mortal, but one evening these plaintive lines were whispered in the breeze, heard only by the bereaved husband,—

Rhag bod anwyd ar fy mab,
Yn rhodd rhowch arno gob ei dad;
Rhag bod anwyd ar liw 'r cann,
Rhoddwch arni bais ei mam.

Oh! lest my son should suffer cold,
Him in his father's coat infold;
Lest cold should seize my darling fair,
For her, her mother's robe prepare.

If you want a taste of Switzerland without going out of Wales, make the ascent of Snowdon in the depths of winter. According to a narrative now before me,—“ The snow on the mountain was nearly three feet in depth, and the ice in many places lay in sheets more than half a mile in extent. The summit was attained by great exertion in two hours and a half. There was a cloudless sky, and an excellent view was obtained. A strong easterly wind prevailed, and the cold was intense. Not only the mountain streams, but the spring near the top, were entirely frozen, and the travellers mixed some snow with their brandy, which froze hard in a few minutes. The descent was made in an hour and a quarter.” Thus it appears that there are glaciers in Wales as well as in Switzerland, if only people would seek after them at the proper time. Perhaps, at some

no distant period, winter excursions to the mountains of North Wales may prove to be the fashion. There is just a little danger attached to them, and that, as times go, is the great recommendation in such matters. Whether this prove the case or no, it may be safely asserted that the Welsh mountains appear grander in the winter than in the summer. The range of the Eryri, when covered with snow, seen from a point of advantage, as from the heights above Bangor, really then deserve their ancient title of the British Alps.

Near the foot of the mountain, about half a mile from Dolbadarn Castle, is a cataract called Caunant Mawr, the Waterfall of the Great Chasm, upwards of sixty feet in height. The stream, after tumbling over a few rocky ledges, rushes down a wide inclined plane, in a different direction, into the pool below. There is an engraving of this fall made by Boydell as early as the year 1750; a period which may be considered the commencing era of Wales as a country of resort for tourists.

Our next long excursion was homewards. We had outstayed our summer's welcome, and even Bangor, so picturesque in brighter weather, began to look somewhat dreary. While there, we were residing in a terrace, of modern growth, erected on the hills at right angles to the Menai Straits, a mile distant from Garth Point; a situation commanding exquisite views of sea and country, the wide expanse of water over the Lavan Sands, bounded by the promontory of the Great Orme, appearing as a large and beautiful lake; with the charming entrance to the Straits and the opposite coast of Anglesea on our left. It was here, late in October, 1859, that we passed a night unequalled perhaps in the annals of storms for the duration and fury of a tempest. The violence of the wind was so great that it burst into the front rooms deluging them with water, howling and beating along like a madman. With such effects on shore, no marvel that the sea in the morning exhibited a dread catalogue of wreck and ruin. The vessels in Bangor harbour had literally

ashed against each other, and burst in pieces. The shore was scattered for miles with fragments of what were yesterday the pride of the waters. It was a painful day for either the coming or the parting guest, and sad was the spectacle exhibited along the shore between this and Chester, the sands being literally dotted with the wrecks. The telegraph wires having been broken, we were without an intimation that there was difficulty in the homeward journey, and it was not until we reached the foot of Penmaenmawr that we found the sea had undermined the rails, which had fallen in within a few minutes after the passage of one of the morning trains; and so we were obliged to scramble up the hill into the old coach-road, walking on to the miserable little station on the other side of the mountain to await our chance of getting forwards. The rails in many other parts were considerably damaged, and at one place, a line had been washed away by the sea which had penetrated over the embankment, so that our train literally walked through the waters,

very slowly to be sure, for a false step would have been fatal. It was late at night before we reached Chester, where we first heard the news of the fearful and memorable wreck of the Royal Charter, which, although occurring that morning so near to Bangor, was, it is singular to mention, not known in that town when we started from it soon after mid-day.

The wreck of the large steamer called the Royal Charter was one of the most appalling catastrophes of the kind that had ever occurred ; hundreds who had so far safely journeyed from Australia, and fondly anticipating the welcome of long-separated friends and relatives before another day had passed, sadly meeting with death within a few yards of the shore of Anglesea. The accounts of their last moments were heart-rending ;—husbands and wives, parents and children, sisters and brothers, clinging together in a last fond embrace before they were overwhelmed by the waters. It is alas that the sounds of mourning and lamentation that then arose

from Moelfra are not yet hushed, and that they sadden the heart in a country that we traverse in the hope of meeting with sunshine and joy. For years and years there will be visitors to Bangor, who will never gaze on its beautiful landscape without there flitting by a vision of the pall and the shroud; and the graves near Red Wharf Bay will be the object of sad pilgrimage, tinged with melancholy and gloom excursions from the beautiful city of the Menai.





IN an obscure corner of the desolate churchyard of Llangelynin, there lay, when we passed by, a human skull exposed to air and weather. Amidst those mountain wilds no one with spade or mattock to give it reinterment, not even a ruddock with charitable bill to cover it with leaves. Yet it is not so many years ago that the occupier of that narrow tenement sighed and laughed, and eat and drank, like you and I. And to be so soon forgotten! Alas that it be so, but it is a rare affection that retains for long the memory of the dead. Happy for him if he, in his day, cultivated favour in that Court where alone forgetfulness never enters.

These reflections are as old as the hills, but I do not know that they are of much use. We all are aware how fleeting and short is life; and many of us often sadly think how like it is to a shadow or a dream, but without being very much the better for it. I have been absorbed in worldly business the entire morning, without one upward thought, when on a sudden I ask if it is to be always thus, are our days to glide away with only an occasional and spasmodic effort to reach the goal for the attainment of which the devotion of an entire life would seem to be inadequate? Barely another mile is traversed, when, turning a corner, they are playing Punch and Judy. I stop of course. I never miss a chance of witnessing a representation of that ancient and inimitable tragi-comedy; and at the mimic belabouring I laugh until I feel that the tears are coming into my eyes. So, you see, there cannot be much good in moralizing.

No, I was not intending to moralize; but the sight of that lonely skull occurring to my mind's

eye, Horatio, I could not help reflecting upon it, at the same time thinking how accurate a type it was of a book. There is not one volume in fifty thousand with which it may not be compared. It is born. It may be the ugliest little toad that ever existed, but its parent cherishes it. Its grand-mamma, the printer, considers it a good-looking babe; and even its aunt, the binder, regards the bantling with pardonable satisfaction in its first new robes. If it dies in its infancy, it is soon thrown under the shards, the flints, and the pebbles. If it survives, it flourishes for a few brief years in the midst of a limited circle of friends and acquaintances; it dies; and it is ultimately thrown into a corner, to be as completely forgotten by the world as is that solitary skull in the churchyard at Llangelynin.

Dear Guildenstern, you are a young author, much such another as I was some twenty years ago. The commencements of our literary careers are so alike that we can dodge one another in the true nursery

fashion. You have published a book, and are delighted at seeing yourself in print ;—that's getting up the first pair of stairs. Just like me. You are patted on the back by your friends, and anxiously scan the opinions of the weekly critics ;—that's getting up the second pair of stairs. Just like me. You have positively been reviewed at length and with favour by the leading journal, and you walk along Fleet Street believing that you are a distinguished author ;—that's getting up the third pair of stairs. Just like me. But you hear sinister forebodings and ill-natured remarks, chiefly made by those who never did write books themselves, never could, and never will, and you feel quite savage ;—that's getting up the fourth pair of stairs. Just like me. My beloved friend, when the time arrives that you can take up the refrain of the nursery dialogue, and say ditto to me, when I talk of twenty additional years from your age having passed over my head, and grey hairs, the harbingers of man's winter, making their appearance, you will think very differ-

ently of all these matters. You will be pursuing literature for its own sake, or for the sake of the good it may effect, not heeding the attainment of that very small and insipid bubble, known as literary reputation. Of course the sinister prophets will say that the grapes are green; but you will laugh, knowing the insinuation to be erroneous, and that this is the last dig they can have at you; for gossips and critics are very like schoolboys, who leave off teasing as soon as they find that you don't care a halfpenny about it. I should not be in the least degree surprised to find that if, some day in the year 1880, a younger and more enthusiastic friend rushes into your dining-room bringing a long and flattering review of your last work that has that day come out in the *Quarterly*, you ask him to take a slice of widgeon, and go on quietly sprinkling your own with lemon and cayenne, undisturbed by the important news that have just arrived.

But, dear Guildenstern, although I think it kinder to warn you that literature will not fulfil the bright-

ness of its early promise, do not relinquish a pursuit, the labours of which, while, as to the world, it is probable they would not be more advantageous if directed to other objects, will, as to yourself, yield more abundant pleasure than any other worldly occupation. You may also rest assured that, independent of your own capacity, if you continue as you have commenced, honestly collecting facts and truthfully recording them, you will, albeit you may wisely learn to disregard it, leave behind you footprints on the sands, dimly marked, but sufficient to tell that you have not been entirely without use in this your day of labour. I heard of our friend Hamlet laughing at you for your book the other day, and telling you that it contained,—words, words, words! Do not be thus discouraged, for, between ourselves,—you need not mention my opinion out of doors,—poor Hamlet is half cracked. My experience may help to console you. It leads me to believe that while very few books will outlive a generation, on the other hand there is hardly one

which does not contain one useful fact or the germ of an idea worthy of preservation. Even in the rare instance in which this is not the case, the author may still be justified, for the work may possibly be, like this, produced with sanitary motives. The time is not far distant when the authorship-cure will take its place by the side of hydropathy, homœopathy, and the various other opathies. In that day, a physician will say to his patient, a merchant (he may be) who has been too deeply absorbed by the anxieties of business,—“My good friend, it is no use my giving you physic. You say you have tried change of air, and your headaches still remain. I do not wonder at it, because they arise from the reflective nerves of the brain having been too long in action on one subject.—You must change your mental pursuits.—You must write a book.” If the invalid be one who is already an author, and who has worked too intensely in a particular direction, the latter part of this address will run something as follows,—“You must abandon for a time the studies

upon which you have been so intently engaged. You had better write a book on some subject which you have never yet considered,—one which has no connection with your previous line of thought.” And the patient does so. He takes up the first subject that comes uppermost, pegs away at it anyhow, and, after amusing himself with correcting the proof-sheets, turns out a little volume much such a one as this is. It is not the least odds to him if any one reads it or no. The object is attained ; the brain is relieved ; the headaches are gone. Now doctors’ medicines occasionally do harm, and certainly never do good to any but the recipient ; but here is a nostrum, of unfailing efficacy to the patient, and one of certain benefit to others. The first proposition I take for granted. The second I prove thus.—The elder Mr. Weller, moralizing on Death, touchingly observed,—“ There’s a Providence in it, Sammy ; there’s a Providence in it, or what ’ud become of the undertakers ? ” So is there a Providence in the rage for authorship ; for, if there were

no cacoethes to write, what in the world would become of the printers? Tell me that, and I'll unyoke.

As I don't suppose, however, that either you or any one else will attempt to controvert such a splendid argument as this, I'll now, dear Guildenstern, say,—good night!

FINIS.

CHISWICK PRESS:—PRINTED BY WHITTINGHAM AND WILKINS,
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

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NOV 15 1932



